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PCSO says lotto now killing 'masiao'

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

NBI witness provides comic relief in probe

By TJ Burgonio

A WITNESS, whom the National Bureau of Investigation touted would demolish the testimony of confessed "jueteng" operator Wilfredo "Boy" Mayor, could provide only comic relief in yesterday's Senate hearing on the illegal numbers racket.

NBI WITNESS/ A17

AFP says Boracay resort family-oriented

By Connie E. Fernandez
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—The controversial military resort on Boracay was constructed for a noble cause—to strengthen the family.

AFP SAYS/ A4

MAS OK ANG PA-BAHAY KESA SA BORACAY!

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Tuesday, June 7, 2005 ★★ 44 pages / 4 sections / Vol. 20 / No. 179 P18

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'Jueteng': Father-son affair

2 bagmen implicate Mike A, refer to Mikey as Lion King

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

IN AN apparent escalation of allegations against the First Family at a Senate inquiry, a new "jueteng" informer yesterday dragged the name of First Gentleman Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo into the gambling scandal.

A second witness came in with his own blows by referring to the President's first son, Pampanga Rep. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo, as a man known in the illegal numbers game as "the Lion King" for his alleged clout.

A third presidential relative, the First Gentleman's brother and Negros Oriental Rep. Ignacio "Iggy" Arroyo, wasn't spared.

Two confessed bagmen testified at the resumption of the Senate inquiry. One of them also implicated some members of a politically powerful provincial family—the Villafuertes of Camarines Sur—in the widening controversy.

But unlike informer Wilfredo "Boy" Mayor who testified last week, the two new witnesses did not mention anything about gambling payoffs for the three presidential relatives.

And neither of the pair provided any concrete evidence to support their allegations.

Even opposition senators agreed that the two new witnesses had not presented anything to directly pin down the Arroyos.

But Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. and Sen. Panfilo Lacson said the new testimony provided a "buildup" of what they said was evidence against President Macapagal-Arroyo's relatives.

Confessed jueteng bagmen Richard "RJ" Garcia and Demosthenes Abraham "Abe" Riva were

'JUETENG'/ A17

ARROYOS: First Gentleman Jose Miguel (top) and son Juan Miguel.

WHISTLE-BLOWERS: "Jueteng" bagmen (left) Richard Garcia and Demosthenes Abraham Riva back up last week's testimony of confessed operator Wilfredo Mayor.

PHOTOS BY JESS YUSON

VILLAFUERTES: Camarines Sur Rep. Luis (top) and son Gov. Luis Raymund

Mikey: I'm not Lion King; witness is Liar King

By Michael Lim Ubac, Philip C. Tubeza and Armand N. Nocum

THE PRESIDENT'S son, Rep. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo, roared with his own denial and a threat of legal action against his accuser.

"I am not the Lion King, but he (Garcia) must be the Liar King."

Confessed bagman Richard Garcia's allegations at a Senate hearing linking government officials, politicians and senior police officers to the illegal numbers game also sparked vigorous denials from the others he had tagged.

"I will have to read the transcript first," said Jess Santos, counsel for First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo. The elder Arroyo allegedly had a bagman operating in Bicol.

Bristling at the testimony of Garcia and another jueteng informant, Wilfredo Mayor, Congressman Arroyo said: "We are innocent, we are against illegal gambling, and we are hopeful that the Senate will see that it is partisan politics that is fueling this current controversy."

Mayor told the Senate last week he gave a purported Arroyo bagman P600,000 a month intended for the President's elder son.

The Pampanga lawmaker said the people behind Garcia had become desperate and resorted to reckless labeling for "media value."

But the younger Arroyo said

MIKEY/ A17

Palace releases 2 CDs of 'bugged' GMA phone call

By Christine O. Avendaño and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

MOVING in the midst of President Macapagal-Arroyo's declaration she would not allow the opposition to destroy her, Malacañang yesterday released two CDs purportedly containing evidence supporting opposition allegations that she attempted to rig last year's elections.

"There are segments of the opposition who want to undermine my ability to govern and even want to destroy me and I will not let them. I will concentrate on my governance," the President told reporters in front of members of the Liberal Party who went to the Palace to express support for her leadership.

Sen. Manuel A. Roxas II said Ms Arroyo was in a "convivial" mood at lunch.

Brig. Gen. Jose Honrado, chief of the Armed Forces Civil Relations Service, said that if the tapes were fabricated, that would be "destabilization to the higher order."

Referring to Malacañang's fears of a fresh plot against Ms Arroyo, Honrado said the Armed Forces had uncovered evidence of fresh recruitment of soldiers by government opponents. He declined to give details.

He said recruiters were capitalizing on the "jueteng" scandal that had engulfed the President's family and controversies surrounding multimillion-peso projects to build a military resort on Boracay and renovate sidewalks in Camp Aguinaldo in the midst of government belt-tightening measures.

One day after he announced the existence of a tape recording of a purported telephone conversation between Ms Arroyo and an unnamed official of the Commission on Elections, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye played to reporters the pair of CDs—one a wiretapped cell phone call and the other snippets of that call spliced with the voice of the sup-

PALACE/ A18

Cell phone firms dispute wiretap claim

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE COUNTRY'S over 27 million cell phone users face the prospect of someone snooping on their text messages or listening to their conversations, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said yesterday.

"If they have the capability to wiretap the President, they have the capability of wiretapping you. And I wouldn't be surprised with this equipment they have that they can wiretap anyone," Bunye said.

But the country's leading cell phone companies are disputing as far-fetched the Palace's claim of wiretapping over their GSM-based (or global system for mobile communication) networks.

A cell phone firm executive, who refused to be identified, said that wiretapping a GSM line was difficult because all messages or phone calls were encrypted and they could only be read by the recipient.

To intercept a GSM call or message, the executive said the eavesdropper should have a high-tech decrypting machine or he would only be getting computer gibberish.

CELL PHONE/ A18

DepEd warns public schools charging fees

By Alcuin Papa and Michael Lim Ubac

ON THEIR first day in school, they were turned away.

Children were prevented from enrolling in public schools for not paying certain fees, according to reports received yesterday by the Department of Education.

Education Secretary Florencio Abad said his office received 28 complaints in the morning, mostly involving fees being charged enrollees by several schools. This practice had been disallowed by the DepEd a month ago.

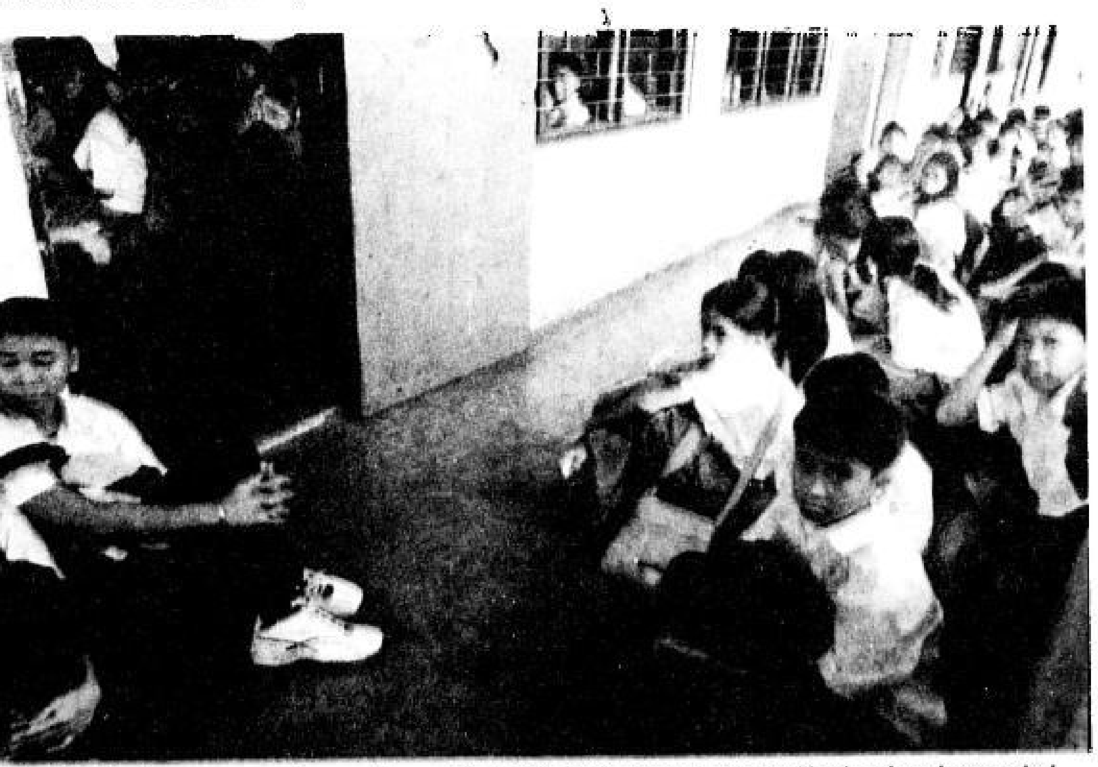
Since May 23, the department has received a total of 546 complaints on the collection of enrollment fees and school contributions from parents enrolling their children in 69 public schools nationwide.

"Nonpayment of these fees is not a reason for not enrolling the students. We have a standing order to enroll everyone, even if the reason given is that the schools are filled up. Any limits to enrollment of the students should be lifted," Abad said.

Earlier, the DepEd warned teachers and other school personnel they would be suspended if they made the payment of miscellaneous fees and other charges a prerequisite for enrollment.

It said students should be enrolled before fees were collected, stressing that payment should be

DEPED/ A4



CLASS ACT. Students occupy the corridors while waiting to be accommodated in the already crowded classrooms of the Batasan Hills National High School in Quezon City.

VAL HANDUMON

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
TUESDAY, JUNE 7, 2005

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Luzon and Visayas will have occasional rains becoming frequent over the western sections. Mindanao will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms. The coastal waters throughout the archipelago will be slight to moderate.
SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: ERIKA A. SARMIENTO, PDI RESEARCH/06/07/05

Second FRONT PAGE

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Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Partly Cloudy

TRAFFICKING IN HUMANS CAMPAIGN

RP in danger of losing US aid

By Volt Contreras

THE COUNTRY could suffer cuts in United States assistance in its campaign against human trafficking if, in Washington's eyes, local perpetrators of forced labor, coercive sex trade and child prostitution remained unpunished.

The US Embassy in Manila raised this scenario yesterday following the release of a US Department of State report that counted the Philippines among the countries deemed to be doing poorly in the fight against this "modern form of slavery."

The US Agency for International Development currently manages five multimillion-peso projects against human trafficking in the country, including a law enforcement training program with the Department of Justice.

The US state department's 2005 Trafficking in Persons Report placed the Philippines in its "Tier 2 Watch List" along with 26 other countries that included China, Russia, India, South Africa, Mexico and Greece.

The Philippines, which was "demoted" to this grouping in 2004, has remained on the list "due to its failure to show evidence of increasing efforts to convict traffickers," the TIP report said.

In 2003 and 2004, there were 583 and 348 convictions, respectively, relating to TIP cases in countries in East Asia and the Pacific region.

"But I'm not aware of any in the Philippines," the embassy's public affairs counselor, Ronald Post, noted in a briefing.

The Philippines is in a group that "requires interim assessment and special scrutiny" with respect to its anti-trafficking performance, the US Embassy's political counselor, Joe Novak, explained.

In the event a "watch list" country slips to the lowest rung – Tier 3 – it will be "subject to restrictions on US government assistance," Novak said.

"We surely hope the Philippines can move up. If there's no progress, then there will have to be discussions about how to deal with that within the US government," he said.

USAID grants for TIP campaigns waged through nongovernment organizations have totaled $605,000 (P32.6 million). These involve NGOs that conduct information drives, documentation or direct intervention in trafficking cases.

The agency also supports the US government's Rule of Law Effectiveness (ROLE) project which trains police and public prosecutors in handling TIP cases, as well as extends services to victims and witnesses.

In a related development, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Qatar – among the US' top allies in the Middle East – were among 14 countries warned by the US state department this week that they faced sanctions if they didn't adequately address human trafficking.

While soaring economies lure millions of workers to the Gulf, authorities said they were struggling to deal with an unwanted byproduct: human traffickers who bring in prostitutes and child camel riders, along with unscrupulous companies that refuse to pay their imported workers.

Emirates Interior Minister Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan said Sunday he was confident the state department's "audit" condemning his country as a haven for smuggled prostitutes and child camel riders would soon be reversed.

"These reports are usually a good occasion to look at the issues from another perspective, as if you're having an auditor look at what you've done," Al Nahyan said. "We're confident that all the steps we're taking are leading to a positive outcome."

The US report also slammed the four countries for exploiting the low-wage foreign laborers who underpin the construction booms underway in the Gulf. It said governments allowed companies to exploit low-paid foreign workers, while withholding passports and sometimes pay.

The Department of State described the labor abuses as "involuntary servitude, a severe form of trafficking."

Arab Gulf countries are packed with more than 10 million expatriate residents who form the backbone of the work force, especially in the booming construction and service sectors. In the Emirates, foreigners make up 80 percent of the population.

Gulf countries, especially the Emirates, also lure thousands of foreign women who are eventually deported as prostitutes, the state department said. A large number, it said, are forced into sexual servitude by criminals from their own countries. *With an AP report*

COPW BULLETIN NO. 8
IMPACT OF VAT LAW ON ALL SECTORS STARTING JULY 1

The COPW will meet with the various Government Agencies, the Senate and the House to assess the impact of the VAT Law on ALL sectors, especially the poor and those falling in the C,D, & E economic classes. The VAT Law will take effect on July 1, 2005.

Before the COPW Chairman left for a six-week trip abroad, we released COPW Update No. 7, which tackled, among others, the VAT Bill.

While we saw the need for the VAT Bill and congratulate Congress for having passed it, we, nonetheless are aware that there is a strong perception that the LAW is far from ideal.

As far back as September 2004, we already informed the Consuming Public that unless we pass NEW revenue measures, increase tax collection, and reflect the true cost of basic services, we will be in a fiscal crisis just like Argentina - sooner than later.

The Consuming Public has been supportive of this COPW position and has been willing to make sacrifices. But, today, Consumers are disheartened to see that a year after being elected President, the same problems still pester us. Thus, we call on the President in her Second Year of Office on July 1, 2005 to address the following issues squarely as this is the "last chance" for the economy to recover: restoration of investor confidence, job creation, education, population management, and making the country globally competitive.

GRAFT AND CORRUPTION
We met with the Department of Finance (DOF) Team headed by Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima, Undersecretary Emmanuel Bonoan, BIR Commissioner Willie Parayno and Bureau of Customs Commissioner Bert Lina. The DOF Team is committed to erase the image that the Agencies under them are the MOST corrupt the past 50 years. In this light, we APPEAL to the private sector to support this tax drive by paying correct taxes.

VAT LAW
We will meet with the House and Senate Ways and Means Committee, the Department of Energy, and the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) regarding amendments on the VAT Law as it takes effect on July 1. We must soften the impact of POWER and OIL PRICE HIKES on the consuming public.

PRE-NEED EDUCATIONAL PLANS
The COPW met with SEC Chairperson Fe Barin on June 3rd for an update on, particularly, College Assurance Plan(CAP), as we have had NO response from the officials of CAP to our COPW Print Ads Parts 1 to 3 released last February, March, and April.

We assure our Consuming Public that after our consultation meetings, we will state the COPW stand on these issues as we know they look to the COPW for full disclosure and transparency.

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Ambassador heads home after flap over 'Nazi' comment

By Volt Contreras and Jerome Aning

PHILIPPINE Ambassador to Israel Antonio Modena, who has earned the ire of his host government for comparing Israeli immigration officials to "Nazis," is due to come home shortly for "consultations" on the state of Filipino workers in the Jewish nation.

The Department of Foreign Affairs announced Modena's return yesterday, the day the press in Manila reported that Israel had demanded an apology from the Filipino diplomat.

In a statement, the DFA said the travel authority for Modena's return was issued by the department "way before the publication of the ambassador's comments." It gave no date for his flight home.

In a newspaper interview published in Israel Friday, Modena said the harsh treatment of foreign workers by Israeli immigration police was comparable to that suffered by Jews at the hands of the Gestapo, the Nazi secret police.

Modena had submitted to the home office a preliminary report on his published comments, Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo said.

The Filipino envoy was scheduled to meet yesterday with the Israeli Foreign Ministry, where he had filed several protests over incidents of abuse against Filipinos.

Modena clarified, though, that his complaints had been directed at the immigration police and not Israelis in general whom he described as a "warm people." He also explained that blacks, Thais and Indonesians also received similar mistreatment.

Filipino workers' groups rallied behind Modena yesterday, with the militant overseas group Migrante saying it should be the Israeli government that should apologize to the Philippines.

"It is the Israeli government that should issue to the Philippines an apology for its treatment of migrant workers and not the other way around," said Migrante chair Connie Bragas-Regalado

"From segregating Filipino travelers at the back of aircraft on flights to Tel Aviv, the confiscation of cell phones and night raids of overseas Filipino workers' homes, the Israel government is the one that [is offensive]. It should be the one to issue an apology, not Ambassador Modena," Regalado said.

The moderate Trade Union Congress of the Philippines expressed alarm over Modena's disclosures and called on the DFA to investigate reports that Israeli immigration officials were mistreating Filipino migrant workers.

TUCP spokesperson Alex Aguilar noted that the report about the alleged mistreatment of OFWs emerged as the country was celebrating Migrant Workers Week.

"It is disheartening and merits a full-blown investigation. If these reports are true, the government should not wait for a single moment in lodging a diplomatic protest with the Israeli government," he said.

Migrante's Regalado commended Modena for filing a protest with Israel. "This is what Philippine diplomats should do, defend the rights of Filipinos in their areas of responsibility," she said.

DOLE belies Tarongoy ransom negotiations

A SENIOR Department of Labor and Employment official yesterday denied reports that the Philippine government and the employer of Robert Tarongoy had agreed to share in the payment of the $8-million ransom Iraqi militants were demanding for the release of the abducted Filipino accountant.

"What I know is that negotiations are still going on, but we won't pay up. It is true we are working hard to release Tarongoy but it is not the policy of the government to pay ransom," Undersecretary for Employment Manuel Imson told reporters.

A highly reliable source in the recruitment industry had told reporters yesterday about the plan of the government and Tarongoy's employer, the Saudi Arabia Transport Co., to split payment of the ransom.

The source said the ransom would be paid and Tarongoy would be released either this month or early in July.

This was denied by Imson, however.

"In the first place, we cannot afford to pay that ransom. We have made our position clear that we are not paying any ransom," he said.

Imson said that Department of Foreign Affairs officials who were in Baghdad, led by Undersecretary Rafael Seguis, were continuing to negotiate Tarongoy's release and were "on top of the situation."

The DOLE, meanwhile, remained in touch with Tarongoy's family and was providing them with whatever assistance they needed, Imson said. *Jerome Aning*

N Mindanao has deadliest roads – DPWH

By Leila B. Salaverria

EXCLUDING Metro Manila, the national roads in Northern Mindanao proved to be the deadliest in the country in a recent 11-month period, according to records of the Department of Public Works and Highways.

From June 1, 2004 to April 30, 2005, a total of 849 traffic accidents on national roads, excluding expressways, were recorded in Northern Mindanao (Region X). The provinces in the region are Bukidnon, Camiguin, Misamis Occidental, Misamis Oriental and Lanao del Norte.

The accidents resulted in 143 deaths, 271 serious injuries and 385 minor injuries.

Most of the accidents—680—were attributed to human error. Vehicle defects caused 104 of the mishaps, 77 were due to drug or alcohol use and 29 were attributed to defects in the roads.

The Bicol Region (Region V) came second in the number of traffic accidents with 638. Bicol, however, ranked third in the most number of fatalities with 100.

Central Luzon (Region III) had the second highest number of people killed in traffic accidents—101—though it ranked 10th in the most number of accidents with 275.

A total of 5,807 traffic accidents on national roads in all the regions in the country except the National Capital Region were recorded for the period.

The fatalities in all the regions totaled 992. Human error accounted for 5,047 of the accidents, 632 were due to drug or alcohol abuse, 480 to vehicular defects and 155 to road defects.

House to publish names of truant solons

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE LEADERSHIP of the House of Representatives yesterday decided to publish the names of congressmen who fail to report for sessions after two legislators had complained about the continuous lack of a quorum in the lower chamber.

Albay Rep. Edcel Lagman said the majority and minority blocs decided after a caucus that it would be more "effective" to publish the names of their truant colleagues instead of adopting a "no work, no pay" policy.

"The exposure of errant members to the censure of the public and their respective constituencies will be more effective than a covert salary deduction," Lagman said.

"Compelling attendance by threatening to reduce the pay of habitual absentees is a light penalty even as it makes attendance merely mercenary," he said.

On Thursday, Representatives Lorenzo Tañada (4th dist., Quezon) and Manuel Mamba (3rd dist., Cagayan) called on the House to implement a "no work, no pay" policy to address the dismal attendance of lawmakers that has stalled deliberations on important bills.

Lagman said the caucus, attended by representatives of all political parties and party-list groups, nixed the idea of making deductions from the salaries of absentee lawmakers.

"Some said that it was too small a penalty while I pointed out that it makes attendance merely mercenary," he said.

"There was a decision that the publication [of absentees' names] should be done on a monthly basis effective in July or the next regular session of Congress. I hope the newspapers would also support us in this," Lagman said.

Flustered by the continuous lack of a quorum, Tañada and Mamba called on the House leadership to revise its rules so that truant lawmakers would be deprived of their pay for not reporting to work.

"Ordinary workers, whether they are in the private or public sector, would have deductions in salary if they do not show up for work. I do not see any reason why the same rules should exempt us," Mamba said.

Tañada noted that since Congress resumed sessions on April 11 after the Lenten vacation, the House had a quorum only when it voted for the expanded value-added tax bill. The House is set to adjourn on June 10.

"It's quite sad that since we opened on April 11, the attendance in the House has been low. The only time we had a quorum was when we passed the VAT law. Outside of that it's when we have a roll call," he said.

Tañada said the majority had to talk to the opposition to ensure that nobody would question the quorum, so that the plenary could continue with its work, mostly debating local bills.

A study funded by the Asian Development Bank earlier estimated that P3 million in taxpayer money was required to pass a bill in the House.

The study also said that about P20 billion was spent in 1987-2001 to finance the operations of the House. *With Bernice Mendoza*

Bong Pineda a no-show at Erap plunder trial

By Nelson F. Flores

SUSPECTED gambling lord Rodolfo "Bong" Pineda failed to appear at the Sandiganbayan yesterday to testify in behalf of former President Joseph Estrada.

Defense lawyer Jose Flaminiano said the antigraft court's summons apparently was not received by Pineda who lives in Lubao, Pampanga. He said the defense would try to locate Pineda.

Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio, however, said the prosecution had received reports that Pineda was out of the country.

The Sandiganbayan Special Division, which was created to exclusively try Estrada's multimillion-peso plunder case, subpoenaed Pineda last Friday upon the request of the ousted President's lawyers. Justice Teresita de Castro presides over the Special Division.

According to lawyer Raymond Fortun, a member of Estrada's legal team, the defense intended to use Pineda's earlier testimony before the House of Representatives in which he denied having anything to do with jueteng.

The House is currently investigating the reported involvement of First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo and Rep. Juan Miguel Arroyo in a new jueteng scandal.

Fortun said Pineda's testimony would be favorable to Estrada, in the light of the claims made by Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson that part of the P545-million jueteng payoff he had given to Estrada had come from Pineda.

"If Pineda is telling the truth, how can Chavit's claim be true? We don't think Pineda would deny his own statement," Fortun said.

In lieu of Pineda, Flaminiano presented lawyer Hilario Ragunjan, the notary public who authenticated Pineda's statement that was forwarded to Rep. Mayo Almario, chair of the House committee on games and amusement.

Ragunjan testified that Pineda went to his office in Makati on May 30 to have his statement notarized.

Villa-Ignacio, meanwhile, asked the Sandiganbayan yesterday to order Estrada's return to Camp Capinpin in Tanay, Rizal.

Villa-Ignacio made the appeal as he asked Special Division Presiding Justice De Castro to act on the government's motion for reconsideration of the order allowing the transfer of Estrada from Camp Capinpin to his rest house across the street.

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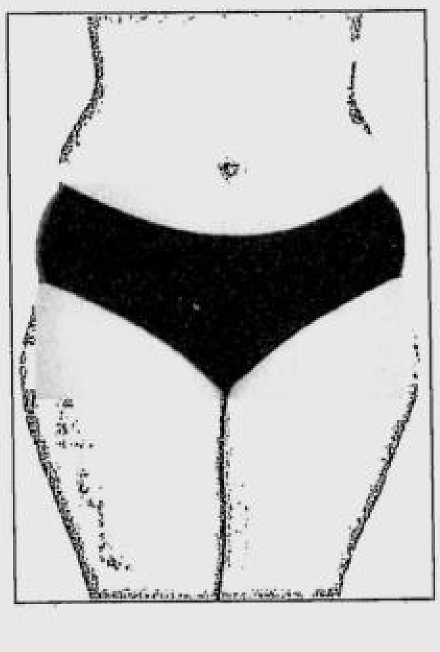

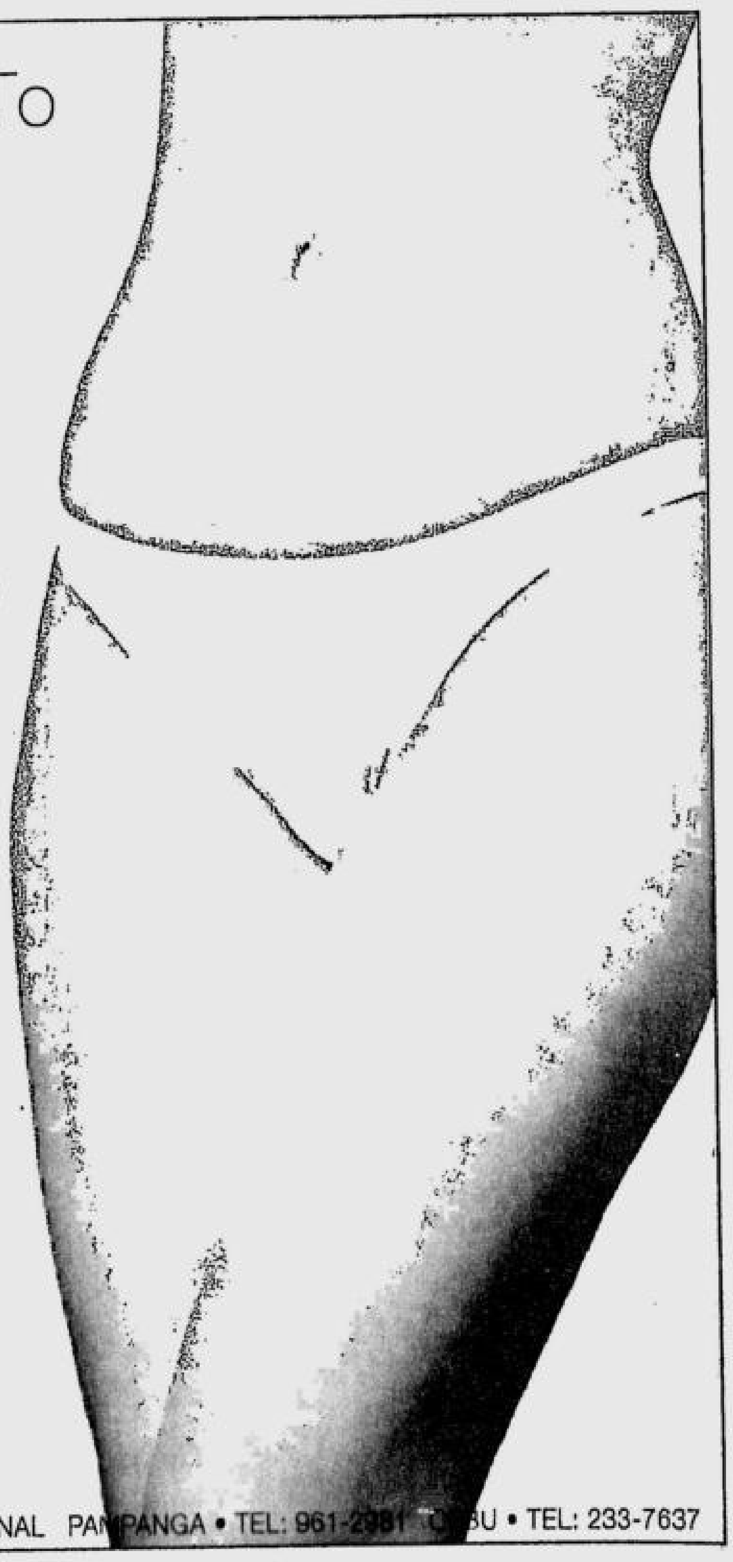

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DepEd warns public schools charging fees

From page A1

voluntary.

The DepEd also prohibited schools from requiring payment of contributions before admission and from refusing to enroll students due to lack of required documents, such as class records, report cards and birth certificates.

However, it allows the collection of voluntary fees for Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Red Cross and the antituberculosis fund drive.

Other complaints received by the DepEd included missing school records for transferees, the proliferation of ambulant vendors around schools, and confusion in class schedules.

Abad quickly stressed that the DepEd received fewer complaints this year compared to the other years.

Overall, the secretary said, the opening of the school year "turned out well," basing his assessment on reports he received from the Philippine National Police, the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) and the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority.

He also noted that Typhoon "Dante" had veered away from the country and avoided drenching schoolchildren on the first day of school.

No longer most congested

Yesterday, Abad paid a visit to the Rizal National High School in Pasig City, which was once "the most congested school in the world" with some 24,000 students.

He said his department, together with local government officials, was able to decongest the school by dispersing most of the students to six annex schools. As a result, the school now has a population of only 9,000 students.

A total of 17.6 million public school students trooped back to the country's 42,000 public elementary and high schools. Another 4.4 million students returned to private schools, colleges and universities around the country.

The student population had increased by 1.68 percent since last year due to the exodus of students from private schools to public schools because of the rising cost of tuition.

The DepEd also said it had lowered the classroom shortage to only 8,644 from 57,930.

Unbelievable claims

"Unbelievable," was how Bayan Muna Rep. Teodoro Casiño described Abad's claim that the classroom shortage had been reduced without new classrooms being built by the government.

"Accounting magic cannot all too suddenly erase immense shortages which parents and students know of first-hand," said Casiño, adding that the 10,000 new teachers to be recruited by the DepEd fell "immensely short" of the 49,699 needed across the country.

Casiño, chair of the House subcommittee on students' and teachers' welfare and vice chair of the House committee on basic education, said he wanted to summon Abad and Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin to explain the formula used to prove that the problem had been addressed despite scarce budgetary allocations.

Please explain

"How can DepEd suddenly reduce classroom shortage from about 57,930 to 8,644? It must be magic. Reassignments can't solve severe shortages. The more precise figure should be 57,930 for class sizes of 50 which is more than the rule rather than the exception in overcrowded public schools," said Casiño.

The more plausible explanation was that Abad was "only making do with the grossly inadequate budget given him by the current Malacañang occupant," which is P102.62 billion this year, said Casiño.

The lawmaker estimated that P72 billion was needed to stamp out shortages in public schools: 57,930 classrooms, 3.48 million seats, 34.7 million textbooks and about 50,000 teachers.

"P72 billion is too small a bill compared to almost half a trillion pesos that Ms Arroyo has long ordered to be appropriated for the most unproductive expenses such as military intelligence, military modernization and foreign debt payments," he said.

He reiterated his call on students and parents to direct their protests at Ms Arroyo, saying "her misprioritization of annual appropriations have resulted in shortages in such vital services as education, among others."

"Ms Arroyo is practically pushing parents into penury and mendicancy due to high cost of education and the lack of adequate state funding for public instruction," Casiño said. "She is the single biggest stumbling block to enlarged appropriations for our public schools."

Paper solution

The Alliance of Concerned Teachers also disputed the DepEd's claim that it had slashed the nationwide shortage of classrooms in public schools by implementing a "two-shift policy," insisting that this was only a "paper solution."

"It seems [someone waved] a magic wand [and] solved the chronic classroom shortage overnight," said ACT chair Antonio Tinio.

"However, it's a paper solution, not a real one. In the real world, those schools that are experiencing shortages are already implementing two- or three-shift schedules. The majority of schools that remain on a one-shift schedule do so because one shift is all they need," Tinio said.

He added that the two-shift policy would only work if it was coupled with a provision for transferring students from congested schools to ones with adequate classrooms. "But DepEd does not provide for that. Moreover, many students and parents would find that impractical."

Teacher shortage

In addition, Tinio said the classroom shortage went hand in hand with the teacher shortage.

"Even if more classrooms become available, there won't be enough teachers to handle the additional sections. Two shifts would mean doubling the number of sections in a school. Where are the teachers who will handle these extra sections?" he asked.

He noted that this school year's teacher shortage stands at 49,699, adding that the current teaching force was "already overloaded yet underpaid."

Tinio and his group scored the DepEd for misleading the public on the issue.

"Instead of telling it like it is, they like to fudge the data when it comes to classroom shortages. Last year, they claimed that they had reduced the classroom shortage from 39,383 to 10,708. It turns out that they brought down the figure merely by changing the formula for computing shortages. They are now using a classroom-pupil ratio of 1:60 instead of 1:45," explained Tinio.

The ACT noted that the shortages claimed by DepEd would have a major impact on the education budget that Malacañang would submit to Congress. "It's crucial that they get the numbers right. If they understate the classroom shortage, then DepEd will continue to receive the pitifully inadequate classroom construction budget that they've been receiving for the past four years."

"Pencil-pushing won't do it. The only real solution to classroom shortages is to build more classrooms," said Tinio.

Better-designed schools

According to engineer Federico Mobo, a member of the Department of Public Works and Highways task force on school buildings, the government has built a total of 8,258 classrooms since July last year.

A total of 1,861 classrooms are under construction, while 2,417 are in the preconstruction stage. Their target for the period of July 2004 to December 2005 is 12,536 classrooms.

Mobo also said the department had come up with a design for cheaper yet structurally superior prefabricated school buildings.

Under the DPWH's proposed design, the new school buildings' frames would be made of structural steel I-beam for beams and columns. The steel sheet materials for the panels would be warranted against defects and corrosion for 10 years.

The components would be lightweight and could be installed manually without the use of cranes.

The buildings would also be completed in 10-12 days, including foundation and painting finish, and could withstand Signal No. 4-type winds and a magnitude-8.5 earthquake.

Other features of the new design are full insulation from heat and sound, including noise from heavy rains. The structure will be fully shielded from rainwater intrusion to protect books, computers and other sensitive materials.

The DPWH is still evaluating sites with flat and accessible terrain, where the newly designed buildings could be built.

AFP says Boracay resort family-oriented

From page A1

Yeah, anything for the family.

The 60-room Sampaguita Family Recreation Center in Barangay Manoc-manoc, Boracay, is an "austere" and "modest" facility intended for soldiers to bond and spend quality time with their families, said Lt. Gen. Emmanuel Teodosio, Armed Forces Central Command (Centcom) chief.

If soldiers plan to hold a weekend of boozing and parties at the center, they will have to change their plans, Teodosio said yesterday in a news conference.

Since it is a family-oriented facility, drinking, gambling and smoking are not allowed in the resort. Guests are also prohibited from wearing uniforms and from bringing in firearms.

The resort staff can even ask for the identification card of a soldier's wife if they have reason to doubt her actual status.

An unmarried soldier can check in and avail himself of a dormitory-type accommodation but he cannot bring his girlfriend with him.

"Our society frowns on extracurricular activities," said Teodosio, stressing that the resort is aimed at strengthening the marriage bond.

Teodosio disclosed that many military families had broken up mainly because the husband-soldier was away serving the country.

"Children don't get to see their fathers because their jobs take them away from their families," he said.

Soldiers are people, too

According to Teodosio, some people don't seem to appreciate the sacrifices made by soldiers and their families. Instead, these people regard them as "working ants" who do not deserve to enjoy a vacation in Boracay with their families.

"Why? Is Boracay not also for soldiers (and their families) to enjoy?" he said.

The resort, which cost at least P10 million to construct, was built with donations from members of the Kaibigan ng mga Kawal sa Kapuluan (KKK) Foundation.

KKK president Nelson Yuvallos said his group came up with the idea for the project after hearing sad stories of how some families of soldiers had broken up and some children of soldiers had turned to illegal drugs.

To strengthen family values, he said, the family should be together.

Affordable rates

But, Yuvallos said, a trip to the mall would not be as fulfilling as bringing the entire family to Boracay, a "dreamland" for ordinary soldiers.

With affordable rates at the resort, he said, soldiers could fulfill this dream with their families.

Teodosio stressed that the facility's priority would be the ordinary soldiers because the generals could afford to stay in other resorts in Boracay.

The room rates are based on the rank base pay. A general and admiral will pay P1,250 per night while a soldier with a rank of private will only be charged P301 a night.

Teodosio said the facility was similar to Hale Koa Hotel in Waikiki, Hawaii, a first-class hotel and recreation facility for members of the US military and their families at affordable rates.

He said the military would also ask shipping companies to give special discounts to soldiers who would go to Boracay with their families.

Basic needs

But the construction of the island-resort had been criticized by sectors concerned with the lack of basic needs of troops in the battlefield.

Teodosio said the military accepted the offer of the KKK to put up the resort in Boracay in order to boost the morale of the soldiers and to give them an opportunity to spend time with their families in the famous island-resort.

He said the KKK did not want to replace the obligation of the government to provide better pay, health services and equipment, among other things, to the soldiers.

Other projects

But he said the KKK was also planning to come up with other projects, including financial assistance to soldiers affected by calamities and educational scholarship for orphans of combat casualties.

Teodosio took exception to the harsh criticisms about the construction of the resort. It is not even on the beach front, where the rich frolic, but about a kilometer from the coastline, he said.

"*Wala bang karapatan ang sundalo na mag-*enjoy *din ang* national treasure *na tinatawag na* Boracay (Don't soldiers have the right to enjoy the national treasure called Boracay)," he said in an emotional speech during the flag-raising ceremony at Camp Lapu-lapu, the Centcom headquarters in Barangay Lahug in this city.

Donations still accepted

At first, Yuvallos said the project was intended for Centcom. Plans changed and the facility would be opened to the entire Armed Forces.

Yuvallos said more than 1,000 KKK members from all over the country had donated to the project. The donations ranged from P10 to P50,000. Others gave air-conditioning units, TV sets and freezers.

Yuvallos said his group would send the book of donations to the United States because Filipino communities there might also want to give donations.

He urged people to support the "noble cause" and show their appreciation for services rendered by the soldiers.

PAF names 1st woman search-rescue pilot

By Nikko Dizon

THE BRIGHT orange flying suit is perfect for the petite frame of Philippine Air Force pilot, Capt. Rosemawattee A. Remo.

On the 35-year-old pilot, the overalls reflect both her femininity and authority, which go a long way toward making people comfortable about entrusting their lives to her hands.

Remo's job is flying helicopters to disaster areas where the injured – or dead – need to be quickly evacuated.

While she has been flying Air Force choppers on rescue missions since 1999, Remo recently became the first full-fledged woman search and rescue pilot of the PAF's 505th Search and Rescue Group. She is also the operations officer of her squadron which is based in Davao City, and used to be her wing's maintenance officer.

Another woman, Lt. Cecilia Bernabe, who is assigned to Mactan, Cebu, and flies a Sikorsky helicopter, is waiting to be checked out as a full-fledged rescue pilot.

A contemporary of Remo, the late Capt. Rizza Simon, would have been today another full-fledged search and rescue pilot had she not died in a rescue mission in Palawan three years ago.

"Search and rescue was my second assignment after graduating from flying school. I realized that it's where my heart is," Remo said in a recent interview.

Remo, who was named after a Malaysian actress, said she first became interested in flying as a young girl growing up in Siasi, Sulu.

"The first time I saw a helicopter was when the late President (Ferdinand) Marcos visited our province. I was in awe of the aircraft," she said.

Soon, it became her dream to fly one.

After earning a degree in education just to please her father who wanted her to become a teacher like him, Remo decided to chart her own course.

She became a soldier, and soon took and passed the test for the Officers' Candidate School in 1994.

In her own words, Remo said: "I rose from the ranks."

Remo said her being a woman and a Muslim had never been an issue in her career.

Of the 56 pilots in the 505th, only she and her husband, Edwin, are Muslim. The other Captain Remo converted to Islam for his wife.

"Religion has never been an issue in the Air Force," Remo said, stressing that her wing works like a tight-knit family.

Remo's aircraft of choice is a Bell 205, the civilian version of the Huey military helicopter, because it is the primary rescue aircraft of the 505th. Remo said she also prefers the Bell because it can hover higher than a Sikorky, another PAF rescue chopper model.

The Air Force only has two Bells in its inventory.

Remo participates in search and rescue missions in Mindanao. She has been awarded a Bronze Cross for a rescue mission in Camiguin, which was hit by a strong typhoon in 2001.

"As a search and rescue pilot, you just have to be determined. If you're easily disheartened, how much more the person you are trying to rescue? And when you see that there's someone in your aircraft dying, you always forget your fear and concentrate on getting that person to the hospital," Remo said.

Now with a seven-month-old daughter, Princess Sikorsky (who was born when Remo was training on those choppers), Remo says thoughts of her child always enter her mind whenever she has to respond to a dangerous mission.

"What will happen to my daughter if something happens to me?" Remo said.

Despite the recent spate of helicopter crashes, two of which were PAF aircraft that claimed the lives of their pilots and passengers, Remo continues to have full confidence in the Air Force's flying fleet.

"As a pilot, my assessment of the aircraft is they are safe. I know that if it flies, it's safe. Each part of the aircraft is good for a certain period only, so we have a new part every time we have to change the old one," Remo said.

She said Air Force pilots work with what the government can afford to give them and they do their best despite having to fly outdated machines.

"What government offers, that's what we'll fly. Of course, we want the nice aircraft but government can't afford to give us that," she said.

CAPT. ROSEMAWATTEE A. REMO

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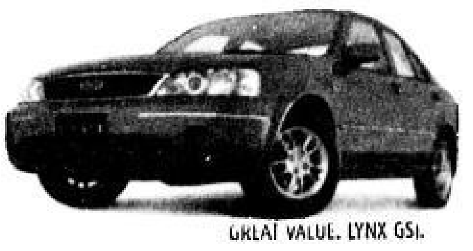

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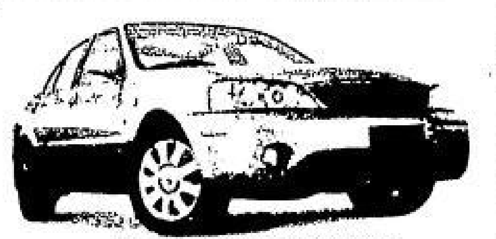
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DOLE rejects Int'l School appeal

THE DEPARTMENT of Labor and Employment has rejected the appeal of International School Manila which had been ordered to pay its Filipino faculty members $7 million in back wages by the Supreme Court.

In a resolution dated May 31, Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas ordered ISM and the local-hire faculty union, the International School Alliance of Educators, to expedite the settlement of their 10-year-old dispute, giving both parties non-extendable deadlines.

According to the order, the ISAE must submit a verified list of the employees covered by the DOLE order and the amounts due them by June 9.

The school was also compelled to comment on the ISAE computations within five days of receipt of the ISAE documents, after which a writ of execution shall be issued by the DOLE.

The recent DOLE resolution deemed the school's motion for reconsideration as lacking in merit, with "no new arguments advanced by the school, to convince this office that an error was committed in the issuance of the assailed order."

"We see no cogent or compelling reason to disturb our earlier ruling," Sto. Tomas said in her three-page decision, referring to her order of April 1, 2005, which goes back to an earlier order dated Feb. 19, 2002.

The DOLE assumed jurisdiction over the labor dispute between ISM and ISAE's 178 members on Sept. 22, 1995, on several issues that included salary and benefits parity among foreign-hires and local-hires.

When the department ruled against them, the union brought the case to the Supreme Court, which said granting higher salaries to foreign-hires constituted racial discrimination against Filipinos in violation of the equal protection clause of the Constitution. *Jerome Aning*

Decide Luisita case quickly, Señeres urged

TWO MILITANT workers groups yesterday asked outgoing National Labor Relations Commission chair Roy Señeres to decide quickly the labor case filed by striking plantation workers against the management of Hacienda Luisita in Tarlac.

In a joint press statement, the farmers' group Unyon ng mga Manggagawa sa Agrikultura and the fisherfolk organization Pamalakaya said Señeres would be doing a "remarkable job of patriotism and statesmanship" if he decided the labor case pending before the NLRC in favor of the hacienda workers represented by the United Luisita Workers Union.

Señeres is NLRC chief until June 30 when his resignation takes effect.

Pamalakaya national chair Fernando Hicap said Señeres could decide on the labor case in less than a week.

"He still has the constitutional powers at his disposal to decide the case in favor of the striking workers of Hacienda Luisita," Hicap said.

UMA national coordinator Roy Morilla said a ruling in favor of the workers would spoil alleged maneuverings on the case by Malacañang and the hacienda owners, the Cojuangcos.

"We appeal to Commissioner Señeres to make a decision now in favor of the moral and legal cause of the Hacienda Luisita workers. This is one important legacy he can leave to the Filipino people before he leaves public service," Morilla said. *Jerome Aning*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, June 7, 2005
10th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: 2 Cor 1:18-22
Gospel: Matthew 5:13-16

Jesus said to his disciples, "You are the salt of the earth. But if salt has lost its strength, how can it be made salty again? It has become useless. It can only be thrown away and people will trample on it.

"You are the light of the world. A city built on a mountain cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp and covers it; instead it is put on a lampstand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way your light must shine before others, so that they may see the good you do and praise your Father in heaven."

Commentary

These readings for the week to come are the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus' new law of love and the Spirit of obedience and truth. Of course we obey the ten commandments and now we dig into them and come up with layers of truth that we must seek to incorporate into our very bodies and lives. We are to be salt: what flavors, heals—cauterizes wounds, cures for eating later, brings out other tastes and highlights, replaces nutrients in our system we lose through sweat and what holds together dung for fuel. Salt was in many places coin of the land. And we are light, boundless light in the darkness like a lighthouse on the edge of a rocky coast bringing direction, protection and warning to others, a beacon of hope and warmth, and welcome. And we are to be this for the glory of God so that others can know our Father and give him praise. This isn't something we do alone—all this demands that we belong to a community and this is our practice, our discipline and our life together. Are we good salt and light?

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

CIVIL LAW (SPECIAL CONTRACTS: SALES)—**Rules of preference in double sales**—Following Article 1544, in the double sale of an immovable, the rules of preference are:

(a) the first registrant in good faith; (b) should there be no entry, the first in possession in good faith; and (c) in the absence thereof, the buyer who presents the oldest title in good faith. Prior registration of the subject property does not by itself confer ownership or a better right over the property. Article 1544 requires that before the second buyer can obtain priority over the first, he must show that he acted in good faith throughout (i.e., in ignorance of the first sale and of the first buyer's rights)?from the time of acquisition until the title is transferred to him by registration or failing registration, by delivery of possession. (Citations omitted.) (Justice Tinga, Consolidated Rural Bank (Cagayan Valley), Inc. v. Court of Appeals, G.R. No. 132161, January 17, 2005) By R. B. Vera

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Keynote Speech
Honorable Norberto B. Gonzales
National Security Adviser
National Anti-Terrorism Coordinator
Anti-Terrorism Task Force

June 8- SESSION 1

The New Terrorism: The Threat and the Response
Dr. Andrew TH Tan
Expert on Southeast Asian Security, Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies, Singapore
Currently leading a team of 25 in the writing of the reference "Handbook on Terrorism and Insurgency in Southeast Asia". Author of several books, the latest being the forthcoming "Southeast Asia: Threats in the Security Environment"

The Southeast Asia Terror Network
Maria A. Ressa
Consultant
Former CNN Jakarta Bureau Chief
Author of "Seeds of Terror", an eyewitness account of Al Qaeda's newest center of operations in Southeast Asia

SESSION 2

Strategic Approach to Counter-Terrorism
Virtus V. Gil
Deputy National Security Adviser
Anti-Terrorism Task Force

Protection of Critical Infrastructures: Public Sector and Private Sector Partnership
Abraham A. Purugganan
Executive Vice President & Chief Operating Officer
Philippine National Construction Corporation

Business Response to Terror
Graeme Campbell
Regional Director, Asia Pacific
ARMOR Group

Risk Management for the Security of Critical Infrastructures
Warren J. Young
Head of Security
Asian Development Bank

June 9 - SESSION 3

Managing Risk for Competitive Advantage
Philip Kennington
Executive Vice President
Hill & Associates Risk Consulting (Philippines) Inc.

(Continuation of Session 3...)

World of technology – Security enhanced . . .
Gillian Sim
Managing Director
United Parcel Service (UPS)

IT Security and The Impact of Secure Software on Homeland Security
Jaime Lyndon Yaneza
Senior Anti-Virus Consultant
Trend Micro

Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing
Kevin Peters
Attache, Immigration and Customs Enforcement
Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Embassy, Manila

Counterfeiting of Goods: The Risks and Links to Terrorist Funding
Jeffrey A. Williams, CPP
President and Managing Director
Orion Support, Inc.
Former U.S. Worldwide Counterintelligence Case Officer with 12 years of Asia-wide Intellectual Property Rights Investigative and Enforcement Experience

Maritime Security
Raymond B. Corrigan
Corporate Senior Manager of Raytheon International, a global defense company serving U.S. and international military, government and commercial customers. Completed his Navy career as U.S. Military Attache in Singapore

Aviation Security
George D. Brennan
President, Aviation Transportation Consultants Co. Ltd.
Formerly with US Transport Security Administration & Federal Aviation Administration

Minimization of Blast Collateral Damage on Critical Infrastructure
John Crawford, President
Dr. Shengrui Lau, Principal Engineer/Technical Director
Karagozian & Case, USA / K&C Protective Technologies Pte. Ltd.,Singapore

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Ople book guides OFWs

A BOOK to guide first-time overseas Filipino workers authored by Undersecretary Susan "Toots" Ople of the Office of the Press Secretary will be launched today at the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration offices in commemoration of Migrant Workers Day.

The book, written in Filipino and entitled "Paalis Ka Na Pala," provides useful information and reminders to OFWs and guides them from the time they prepare for their employment to the time they return to the Philippines.

"I was inspired to write this book when my late father was still secretary of foreign affairs. On one of our trips abroad, I found myself seated beside a clueless Filipino OFW who was quite nervous because it was her first time to leave the country," Ople said.

The author is the daughter of the late Foreign Secretary Blas F. Ople, a former labor secretary, senator and member of the 1986 Constitutional Commission who is acknowledged as the "Father of Overseas Employment."

AIDS numbers growing – Duque

By Christian V. Esguerra

FIRST the good news: The Philippines is still among the countries with relatively few cases of AIDS and HIV – it had only 2,260 reported as of April.

And now the bad news: What we're seeing is just the tip of the iceberg – it's just a matter of time before the number of victims grows by "leaps and bounds."

"(The disease) is just around the corner," Health Secretary Francisco Duque III told reporters yesterday. "It could just break out and reach alarming levels."

10 cases last April

Between January 1984 and April 2005, the Department of Health registered only a total of 2,260 cases of HIV infection. Ten new cases were reported to the DOH's national epidemiology center last April.

"But the mere fact that HIV incidences are low, even after a couple of decades, is something that shouldn't, ironically, be an excuse for us to be complacent," Duque emphasized.

"We have to keep our guard up and make sure that the public in general is adequately informed that this disease could have the potential for an outbreak, and probably reach epidemic proportions if left unguarded," he said.

10,000 believed infected

Earlier, Dr. Roderick Poblete of the Philippine National AIDS Council estimated that there were actually around 10,000 Filipinos afflicted with the deadly virus.

That's because for every case documented, Poblete said the government was most likely missing out on three or four more cases because of the victims' refusal to come out in the open.

Admitting yesterday that the current figures were just the "tip of the iceberg," Duque acknowledged assessments that the problem was actually "hidden and growing."

He urged the public to help the DOH in its surveillance of AIDS/HIV cases.

He said people could help by encouraging their relatives, friends or neighbors whom they suspect of having the virus to seek professional help.

In a previous interview, Poblete said many AIDS carriers remained in hiding, fearful that they might be discriminated against by society at large. The continuing reluctance made it difficult for the government to assess the real extent of the AIDS problem, he said.

Erase stigma

"We really have to erase the stigma and the discrimination," Poblete said. "Once society becomes ready to care for the (HIV-) positive individual, that's the time we will finally see the real magnitude of the problem."

Based on the latest DOH figures, 749 overseas Filipino workers are infected with HIV. Of these, 268 are seafarers, 126 domestic helpers, 69 employees, 52 health workers and 50 entertainers.

Of the 2,260 known total cases, 1,391 were infected through sexual intercourse.

Marcos foe dies at 66

LUCENA CITY – Quezon human rights lawyer Euclides "Ed" Abcede passed away at 9 p.m. on Sunday after a lingering illness, his daughter Sunshine said. He was 66.

After his wife Pat died two months ago, Abcede, suffering from diabetes, also had a stroke.

On Friday, his family rushed him to the MMG Hospital where he expired.

UP grad

A 1962 UP College of Law graduate, Abcede was best remembered as Quezon's foremost human rights lawyer who fought the Marcos dictatorship.

"His death has created a big dearth for the hapless multitudes in their search for justice," Quezon leftist leader Pedro "Tata Pido" Gonzales told the INQUIRER in a text message.

Release

Respected even by members of the communist movement, Abcede was instrumental in the safe release of several government soldiers who had been captured by the New People's Army.

He was designated Lucena City officer-in-charge when former President Corazon Aquino came to power in 1986.

In 1987, he ran for Quezon governor but lost. He went back to the private practice of the law.

Fiesta

During his term as Lucena OIC and together with Aguinaldo Miravalles, then chief of the Bureau of Internal Revenue local office, the duo conceived of "Pasayahan sa Lucena," a week-long fiesta that culminates with the celebration of the feast of St. Ferdinand, the patron saint of Lucena, on May 30.

Abcede was a recipient of the "Quezon Medalya ng Karangalan" in 2003.

Aside from Sunshine, he is survived by his US-based son Learned, daughter-in-law Gloria and their two children, as well as four siblings.

Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

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The WORLD

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Saddam to be tried on just 12 charges

BAGHDAD—Iraq said it would bring 12 charges of crimes against humanity against Saddam Hussein although there were more than 500 possible cases against the ousted dictator.

The Iraqi government also announced Sunday the arrest of two senior members of the organization of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the alleged leader of the al-Qaida terror network in Iraq.

"There are possibly more than 500 cases being prepared against Saddam Hussein, but there is no reason to waste time in dealing with them all," government spokesperson Leith Kubba told reporters.

"We are completely confident that the 12 fully documented charges that have been brought against him are more than sufficient to ensure he receives the maximum sentence."

Saddam, whose regime was toppled in April 2003 and is now in US custody in Iraq awaiting trial, could face the death penalty if found guilty.

His trial should begin within two months, said Kubba.

This is the first time the final number of charges to be brought against Saddam has been announced, although the judge in charge of his trial said on Saturday that 12 charges had been completed so far.

SADDAM

Saddam faces a litany of accusations from his more than two decades in power including the 1988 chemical attack on the Kurdish village of Halabja, the forceful repression of the 1991 Shiite rebellion and the 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

State TV in Iran, which fought a war with Saddam's Iraq between 1980-1988, announced Sunday Tehran had handed over Iran's accusations against the former Iraqi dictator to the court that will try him.

Kubba vowed that the Shiite Muslim-dominated government of Prime Minister Ibrahim Jaafari would eradicate what he described as the "Saddamist, fascist thinking and hardline Muslim ideas."

Saddam loyalists and foreign Muslim militants are accused of fueling the insurgency which receives sympathy from much of the once-dominant Sunni Arab community.

Two senior members of Jordanian-born Zarqawi's network were recently arrested in the northern city of Mosul.

Motleq Mahmoud Motleq Abdullah, also known as Abu Raed, was arrested in Mosul on May 28, a government statement said Sunday.

Abu Raed is described as a close aide to Abu Talha, the Mosul chief of Zarqawi's al-Qaida Organization in the Land of Two Rivers, and his financial manager.

"Abu Raed is responsible for organizing his meetings with some terrorists and is aware of all his plans and crimes," it said.

The announcement of Abu Raed's arrest comes three days after the capture of another Zarqawi associate in Mosul.

Zarqawi, who has $25-million bounty on his head, is believed to have been wounded, but the severity of his wounds are not immediately known.

But Iraqi Foreign Minister Hoshyar Zebari told CNN television that unrest in Iraq was likely to continue even if Iraqi or US forces capture Zarqawi. *AFP*

US military destroys insurgent bunkers

BAGHDAD—The US military said Monday it destroyed two bunkers suspected of being used by insurgents to store weapons and plan attacks as seven members of Iraq's security forces were wounded in two separate bombings.

US forces destroyed a former Republican Guard bunker system in the Yusifiyah area southwest of the capital on Thursday following a tip-off by local residents and surveillance of the site, said a military statement.

It said the bunker, located in an area that housed a major part of ousted dictator Saddam Hussein's former military-industrial complex, was being used by insurgents to store ammunition.

"Coalition Forces engaged the complex with five high-precision smart-bombs," it said.

"Secondary detonations emanating from inside the complex" continued for about six hours after the strike, but no civilians were injured in the operation, the statement added.

On Sunday, US troops destroyed a bunker system built in an abandoned rock quarry in Karmah, near the former rebel bastion of Falluja west of Baghdad, which had been found four days earlier.

About 150 kg of plastic explosives were used to destroy the network and the weapons stored inside, the military said, adding that 12 weapons caches were also found within an eight kilometer radius of the bunker.

The whole complex was 170 meters wide and 275 meters long or bigger than four football pitches and fresh food inside showed the hideout had been recently inhabited:

Fully furnished living spaces were found in the warren, along with a kitchen, showers and an air conditioner, hi-tech combat equipment such as night vision goggles and a large haul of weapons and ammunition.

As US and Iraqi forces pressed on with Operation Lightning aimed at routing out insurgents in Baghdad and surrounding areas, rebels struck again Monday against their favored targets.

Three members of the elite Iraqi commando force were wounded in a car bombing in the capital's southwestern Al-Amil neighborhood, said a source at the interior ministry.

Earlier, four Iraqi soldiers were wounded when a suicide car bomber blew himself up at the entrance of a joint US-Iraqi security coordination center in Tikrit, Saddam's home town north of Baghdad, said local police.

A US soldier died Sunday after his patrol was struck by a roadside bomb near Iraq's northern oil city of Kirkuk, the US military said Monday.

The latest death brought the number of US service personnel killed in Iraq to 1,670, according to an AFP tally based on Pentagon figures.

More than 1,200 suspects have been arrested since the launch of Operation Lightning at the end of May, one of the bloodiest months since the US-led invasion of March 2003 that saw about 700 Iraqis killed in a frenzy of attacks throughout the country. *AFP*

WANTED: BIKE-FRIENDLY CITIES People ride their bicycles at the 10th Sternfahrt bike ride in Berlin June 5. Around 250,000 cyclists from all over Europe are expected to take part in the world's largest bicycle ride to call for safer cycling and cycle-friendly cities. REUTERS

Japanese FM calls China's war shrine criticism 'absurd,' defends history text

TOKYO—Japanese Foreign Minister Nobutaka Machimura on Monday called China's criticism of visits to a war shrine "absurd" and defended a controversial history textbook, accusing Beijing of ignoring Tokyo's pacifist record as a donor.

China has said relations were at a three-decade low due to an annual pilgrimage by Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi to the Yasukuni shrine, which honors 2.46 million Japanese war dead, including 14 convicted war criminals.

"As soon as he visited the Yasukuni shrine, China said Japan was turning to militarism and we were not peaceful. This is absurd," Machimura said.

"We gave them aid, even by issuing deficit-covering bonds. At least in the '90s, we were the world's biggest provider of aid" to China.

"I can say this proudly," Machimura told a foreign ministry meeting on foreign aid.

Koizumi has visited the Yasukuni shrine each year since he took office in 2001, with his last visit on Jan. 1, 2004.

He has indicated he will go again this year despite criticism from China and South Korea, which were invaded by Japan in the 20th century, and also appeals by former prime ministers concerned about Japan's diplomatic isolation.

In April sometimes violent protests erupted in China, which accuses Japan of not atoning for its past after Tokyo approved a history textbook written by self-described nationalists who believe Japan is too apologetic about its wartime record.

But Machimura defended the book by the Fusosha publisher, saying that "leftist Japanese scholars and journalists" had taken the issue out of proportion.

"If you read the textbooks you know," Machimura said. "Obviously there is no textbook that praises militarism and colonialism.

"The teachers' union would not adopt a textbook unless it has leftist-slanted passages," Machimura told a luncheon hosted by Jiji Press.

"Even the Fusosha book is on the center of the fairway. Certainly nor in the right-side rough. Certainly not out of bounds," he said, using a golf analogy.

"I think the textbook problem was formed only by slogans and prejudice. If we explain, the issue can be understood," he said. *AFP*

37 killed as Nepal bus hits land mine

KATMANDU—At least 37 people were killed and dozens more wounded Monday when a crowded bus detonated a land mine planted by suspected communist rebels in Nepal's south, an army official said.

The bus was traveling on a rural highway near the village of Badarmude when it was ripped apart by the explosion, an army official said on condition of anonymity. Army officials are not allowed to reveal their names in Nepal for security reasons.

Thirty-seven people died and 72 others were wounded, some of them critically, the official said.

A local hospital was overwhelmed with patients, with not enough doctors to perform surgery, local reporters said.

Police suspect the land mine was planted by Maoist rebels, who have been fighting since 1996 to abolish Nepal's constitutional monarchy and set up a communist state.

The guerrillas have stepped up violence since Feb. 1, when King Gyanendra took control of the government and imposed a state of emergency that was lifted in April. *AP*

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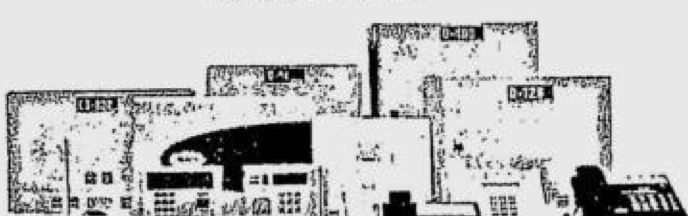

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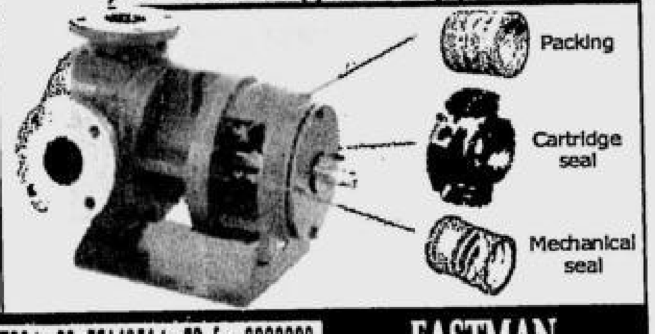

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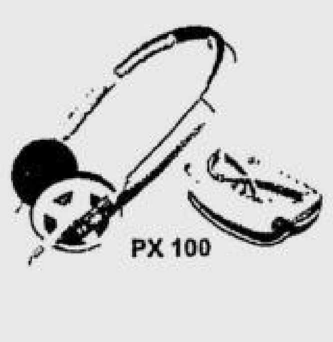
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US running 'archipelago' of secret prisons around the world–Amnesty International

WASHINGTON—The US government is operating an "archipelago" of prisons around the world, many of them secret camps into which people are being "literally disappeared," a top Amnesty International official said Sunday.

AI Executive Director William Schulz criticized the administration of US President George W. Bush for holding alleged battlefield combatants in "indefinite incommunicado detention" without access to lawyers in an interview with Fox News Sunday.

Schulz was pressed to substantiate Amnesty's claim in a May 25 report that the US prison camp at the Guantanamo Bay, Cuba naval base—where hundreds of foreign terror suspects are being held indefinitely—represents the "gulag of our times."

The gulag claim, referring to the notorious prison camp system of the Soviet Union, has drawn withering criticism from the US president, who called it "absurd." Vice President Richard Cheney and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld have also slammed the rights group's claim.

Russian 1970 Nobel Prize winner Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn described the Soviet prison camp system in his best-selling book "The Gulag Archipelago."

Schulz said the gulag reference was not "an exact or a literal analogy."

"But there are some similarities. The United States is maintaining an archipelago of prisons around the world, many of them secret prisons into which people are being literally disappeared—held in indefinite incommunicado detention without access to lawyers," Schulz told Fox.

Asked how AI could compare the detentions of millions of Soviet citizens in the gulag system to purported anti-US combatants captured on the battlefield, Schulz said some of those held in Guantanamo "happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time.

"We do know that at least some of the 200 some prisoners who have been released from Guantanamo Bay have made pretty persuasive cases that they were imprisoned there, not because they were involved in military conflict but simply because they were enemies of the Northern Alliance," he said.

Schulz called for an official probe into the alleged rights abuses at US detention centers around the globe.

Amnesty refers in the May 25 report to Rumsfeld and US Attorney General Alberto Gonzales as alleged "torture architects."

The United States "should be the one that should investigate those who are alleged at least to be architects of torture, not just the foot soldiers who may have inflicted the torture directly, but those who authorized it or encouraged it or provided rationales for it," Schulz said.

According to Amnesty, Rumsfeld provided "the exact rules, 27 of them in fact, for interrogations, some of which do constitute torture or cruel, inhumane treatment," Schulz said.

The Guantanamo Bay camp and US detention practices have been the subject of renewed debate in recent weeks, sparked by a Newsweek magazine report—since retracted—that Guantanamo interrogators flushed a Koran in a toilet to rattle Muslim prisoners. *AFP*

PALESTINIAN girls learn how to read the Koran inside Saud Hasham mosque in Gaza city June 5. The White House sought on Saturday to minimize damage from new revelations about US personnel mishandling the Koran at the Guantanamo Bay prison in Cuba. REUTERS

S. Africa's 'Dr. Garlic' to address AIDS meet

JOHANNESBURG—South Africa holds its second national AIDS conference this week with a much-awaited address on the program from the health minister who has questioned the use of antiretrovirals to fight the pandemic.

Health Minister Manto Tshabalala-Msimang is to speak at the opening day on Tuesday of the four-day conference in Durban to be attended by some 4,000 delegates including researchers, medical professionals, ac

The conference follows up on the first national meeting held in 2003 just as President Thabo Mbeki faced legal action from AIDS activists to provide free antiretrovirakl drugs (ARVs) to AIDS patients.

"She will be making an address," the health minister's spokesperson Charity Benghu said. "Surely she would want to participate in an event such as that."

Tshabalala-Msimang caused a furor earlier this year when she criticized the life-prolonging drugs for their side effects and insisted that good nutrition—including her much-touted diet of raw garlic, lemon peel, olive oil and beetroot—was key to combating the AIDS virus.

"Raw garlic and a skin of the lemon—not only do they give you a beautiful face and skin but they also protect you from disease," she said last month.

"It is absolutely critical that our people know about the side-effects, particularly because these are new medicines and not much is known about them," said the health minister, whom the press here has dubbed "Doctor Garlic."

South Africa's most influential AIDS lobby group, the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC), called for the health minister's resignation while Nobel Peace Prize winning international medical group Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF —Doctors Without Borders) urged the government to "stop the fake polemic" between nutrition and ARVs. *AFP*

Hezbollah says Lebanon triumph to keep arms against Israel

BEIRUT—The pro-Syrian Shiite Muslim Hezbollah coalition claimed Monday a sweeping victory in south Lebanon elections which it said was a clear message thât anti-Israel guerrillas should be able to keep their arms.

The mighty Hezbollah and rival Shiite movement Amal announced a clean sweep of all 23 seats in the second round of the parliamentary elections, with a pledge to keep on with the armed resistance against Israel.

In the first elections to be held since Syria was forced by intense global pressure to end last month its 29-year military presence in Lebanon, the two groups maintained their grip on the volatile southern region still intermittently rocked by border clashes with Israel.

"The southerners wanted to state clearly a 'yes' for a unified stand toward the resistance and for the unity of Lebanon," Hezbollah number two Sheikh Naim Qassem told reporters after Sunday's vote.

"They gave a clear message to the foreigners, particularly to the Americans, that the people of Lebanon are unified over the resistance and the independence" of the country, he said.

Official results are to be announced on Monday.

Amal's influential chief Nabih Berri, who is also Lebanon's parliamentary speaker, said: "I thank the people of southern Lebanon for their confidence in the coalition and for its continued victory, with all its candidates."

"This is not a steamroller victory... this is a victory that is like the waves of the sea, it cannot subside before fulfilling its demands and objectives in ending deprivation and deterring aggression," he said. *AFP*

Envoy: China not keeping 1,000 spies in Australia

SYDNEY—China's ambassador to Australia on Monday denied claims from a fugitive diplomat that her country has more than 1,000 spies in the country, calling his fears about agents chasing him "quite wild stories."

While Ambassador Fu Ying said she was not aware of Chen Yonglin's complaints before he left, she said he would be treated fairly if he returned to China.

Chen, who was first secretary at the Chinese consulate general in Sydney until resigning late last month, has applied to the Australian government for political asylum, saying he can no longer stomach his country's repression of democracy activists and members of the Falun Gong movement.

Speaking Sunday at a rally to mark the killings of pro-democracy students in Tiananmen Square in 1989, Chen said that China had more than a thousand agents in Australia and that they had carried out kidnappings of Chinese nationals.

He also said he thought he had been followed by Chinese operatives after speaking to Australian officials about his defection and that he feared persecution if returned to Beijing.

Fu said Chen had little to fear in China.

"I don't think there is any reason China would punish him," she told reporters.

"There are laws which would guarantee his freedom. But can you guarantee that he is not going to do anything that was against the law.

"China is not a country behind a bamboo curtain any more, it is a normal friendly country like any country in the world."

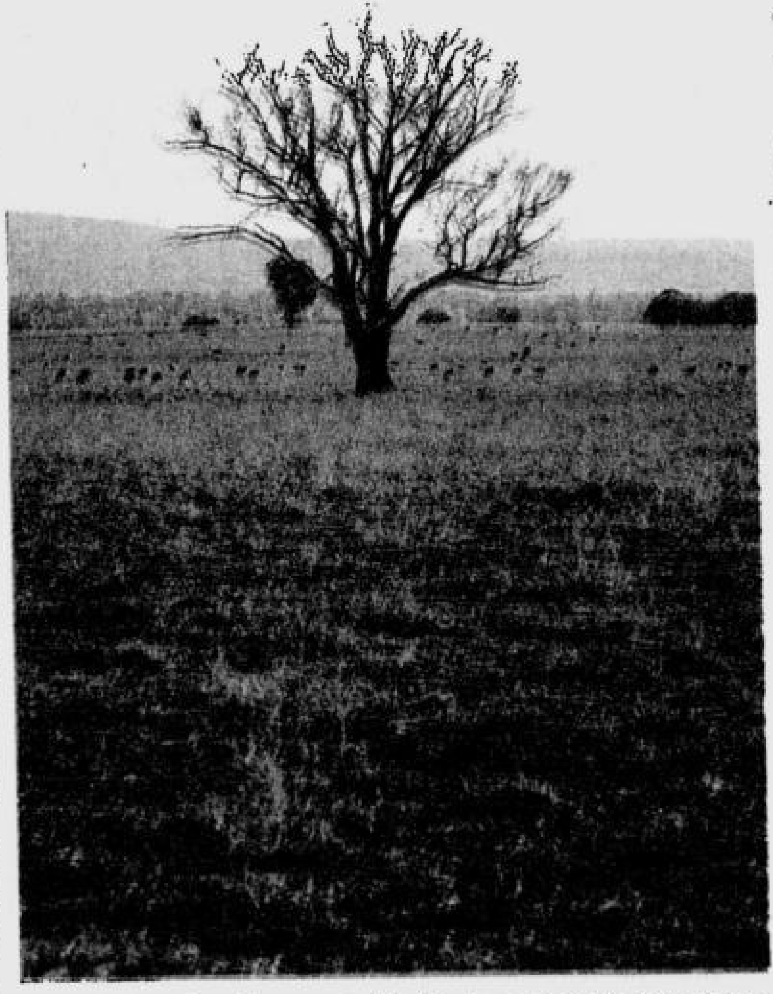
Fu said that while consulate staff had attempted to contact Chen after he left, security officers were not hunting him. She also rejected his claim that Beijing had 1,000 spies in Australia.

"I hope one day our people will know each other so well these kinds of stories will find no reader, will find no believers," she said.

"The stories about security people chasing him are... quite wild stories."

Chen, 37, who is living in hiding with his wife and 6-year-old daughter, was Monday in talks with lawyers about his application for asylum.

A spokesperson for Chen said the former diplomat was still hopeful that Australia would grant him political asylum but he would not elaborate on the discussions or Chen's current status. *AFP*



WORST drought—Sheep scratch for feed on a drought affected farm near Cowra, about 260 km west of Sydney May 30. Eastern Australia is into the third month of the worst drought farmers can remember—more severe than the 2002 drought which the weather bureau classes the worst in a century. REUTERS

Jackson trial jurors to resume deliberations

SANTA MARIA, Calif.—Jurors in Michael Jackson's sex abuse trial were expected to resume their deliberations on Monday as the pop star waited at his Neverland Valley Ranch for a verdict that could clear his name or brand him a convicted child molester.

Spokesperson Raymone Bain has said Jackson intends to wait out the verdict at Neverland, surrounded by friends and family members and relaxing as best he can considering the gravity of the situation.

"He's going to probably be wanting to pull his hair out," Bain said.

While the jury took the weekend off, the apparently ailing Jackson triggered a media frenzy on Sunday when he made his fourth trip to the hospital since the trial began four months ago and his second in the past week.

The 46-year-old singer, who in recent days has appeared shaky and frail as he left court, was driven from Neverland to a nearby hospital and spent about five hours being treated for what a spokesperson described as a recurring back problem.

Jackson's security detail went to great lengths to hide him as he left the hospital on Sunday evening, parking a black sports utility vehicle with tinted windows on a sidewalk just feet from the front doors and smashing into a small bench in the process.

Hospital staff erected a screen and draped bed sheets to keep reporters and Jackson fans from catching even a glimpse of the entertainer as he climbed into the car and scuffles broke out in the street as photographers clamored for a picture.

Jackson is charged with molesting a boy, then 13, at Neverland in February or March of 2003, plying the young cancer patient with alcohol in order to abuse him and conspiring to commit child abduction, extortion and false imprisonment.

The man who once crowned himself King of Pop faces more than two decades in prison if he is convicted on all 10 counts of a Santa Barbara County grand jury indictment.

Jurors were handed the case by Superior Court Judge Rodney Melville on Friday afternoon and spent about two hours behind closed doors before quitting for the weekend. They must consider the testimony of 140 witnesses and sift through about 600 items of evidence in reaching a verdict. *Reuters*

France asks self: Is the 'Anglo-Saxon model' its cup of tea?

By John Leicester

PARIS—For years, French children have learned from "Asterix in Britain," when the plucky comic-book Gaul of ancient times and his buddy Obelix have adventures across the English Channel, that Britons break for a cup of hot water (they hadn't yet discovered tea) every afternoon and won't work weekends.

And the Brits' penchant for pauses proves, in the book, to be their downfall: They get invaded by Romans because they're too busy putting their feet up.

Now, tables have turned. Instead of poking fun, some in France are wondering whether the country shouldn't be learning from its island neighbor to the north. They point to Britain's far lower unemployment, higher economic growth and perceived dynamism and wonder: Are we the ones taking life too slow?

Renewed interest in "the Anglo-Saxon model" springs from France's wider search for answers to its economic problems and fears that the forces of globalization—a bit like the Romans in "Asterix"—threaten to sweep away the beloved French way of life.

Politicians, sections of the French media and business executives note that France's unemployment rate—at 10.2 percent, rising to 23.3 percent among under-25s—is more than twice that of Britain. Some say that's because the British labor market is more flexible than France's— and that perhaps there are lessons to be drawn.

Others wonder whether Britain isn't doing better because of its refusal to adopt the euro currency used by 12 European nations including France.

There are figures to support that argument: Economic growth was an anemic 1.8 percent last year in the euro zone, with France faring a bit better with 2.3 percent, according to the Paris-based Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. British growth, in contrast, was 3.1 percent and, the OECD predicts, will be 2.4 percent this year—twice the euro zone's expected 1.2 percent.

For the moment, radical reform does not appear on the agenda of the new French government put into place by President Jacques Chirac in response to France's stunning May 29 "no" to the proposed European Union constitution.

The vote and the heated and divisive national debate that preceded it energized leftists, trade unions and antiglobalization activists who campaigned for a "no." They would likely be the first to take to the streets at the merest hint from the government that it is thinking of treading the British path of the past two decades, breaking the power of trade unions, freeing up labor markets and privatizing some public services like the rail network.

Even before the referendum, Chirac acknowledged that the British model is a nonstarter with most of the French, whose deep attachment to their system of state-funded public services and strong labor and social protections was a primary reason for their rejection of the EU treaty. An exit poll found that 40 percent of "no" voters regarded the constitution as too economically liberal, in sum that it would open the door to unfettered—read British-American-style—capitalism.

"Great Britain considers that economic development is paramount," said Chirac in a television interview four weeks before the vote. "The result is that they have half of our unemployment, but at a social cost that would not be accepted in France. I'm not casting judgment. It's a fact."

Chirac's new prime minister, Dominique de Villepin, was quick in his first week on the job to toe his boss' line. In a television interview, Villepin described himself as a "pragmatist profoundly attached to the French model," although he also said "everything must be tried" in the fight against unemployment, which he has made his government's top priority.

But others are asking questions of the French system—not least Villepin's No. 2, Interior Minister Nicolas Sarkozy. Sarkozy, who is widely believed to have ambitions on the presidency at the next elections in 2007, says the best social model is one that provides jobs for all and "so is no longer ours." *AP*

Sudan to face ICC war crimes probe

THE HAGUE—The International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague was expected on Monday to announce the launch of a war crimes probe into atrocities committed in Sudan's western Darfur province, sources here said.

The court's chief prosecutor, Luis Moreno Ocampo, who was expected to make the announcement, was initially unavailable for comment.

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan has given the ICC the names of 51 suspected war criminals, following an international investigation into abuses in Darfur, torn by a conflict that has claimed an estimated 180,000 lives.

The UN inquiry in January found that Sudanese government forces and militias had committed abuses including murder, torture, rape and pillage in the suppression of the two-year-old ethnic minority uprising in Darfur.

It established that war crimes and human rights violations had been committed in the province, while falling short of the definition of genocide.

The UN Security Council adopted a resolution in early April calling for the 51 named suspects, including senior officials, to face prosecution before the ICC, overriding strong opposition from Khartoum.

Sudan has vowed to defy the Security Council's demand for international prosecution of the officials, security force and militia commanders accused of violations in Darfur. *AFP*

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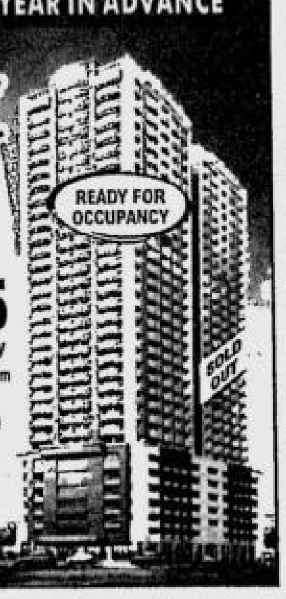

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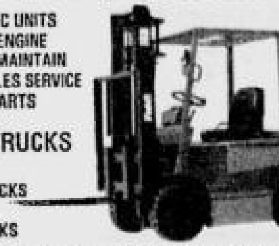

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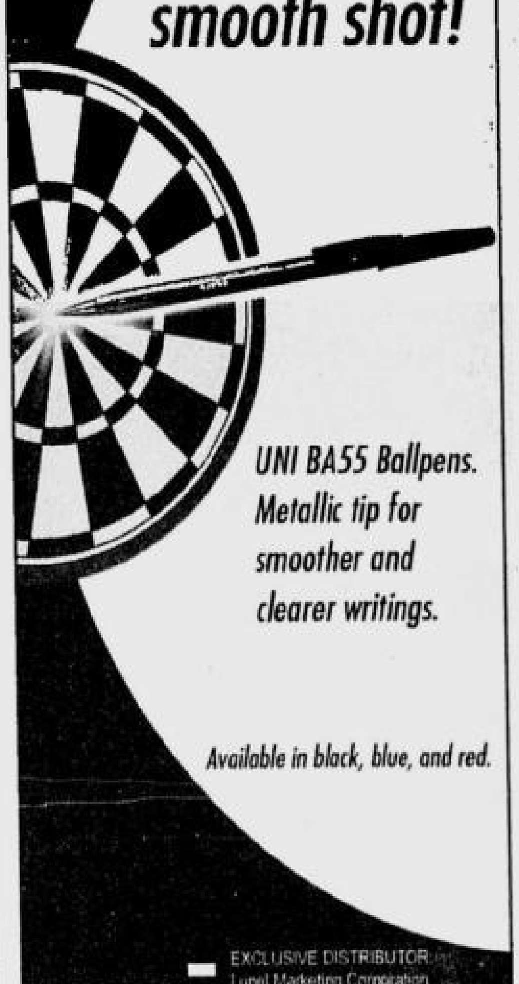

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ISSN 0116-2642
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
Vol. 20 No. 179
OPINION
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THE PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER, INC. has its business and editorial offices at
•Chino Roces Ave corner Yague and Mascardo Sts., Makati City
•P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office 1263 Makati City
•Our telephone numbers are 897-8808 connecting all departments
•Editorial Fax 897-4793 / 897-4794 •Advertising 897-4807
•Circulation 527-3342 / 527-3348 / 528-0183 / 528-0186 and 528-0213 / Fax: 528-02-34.

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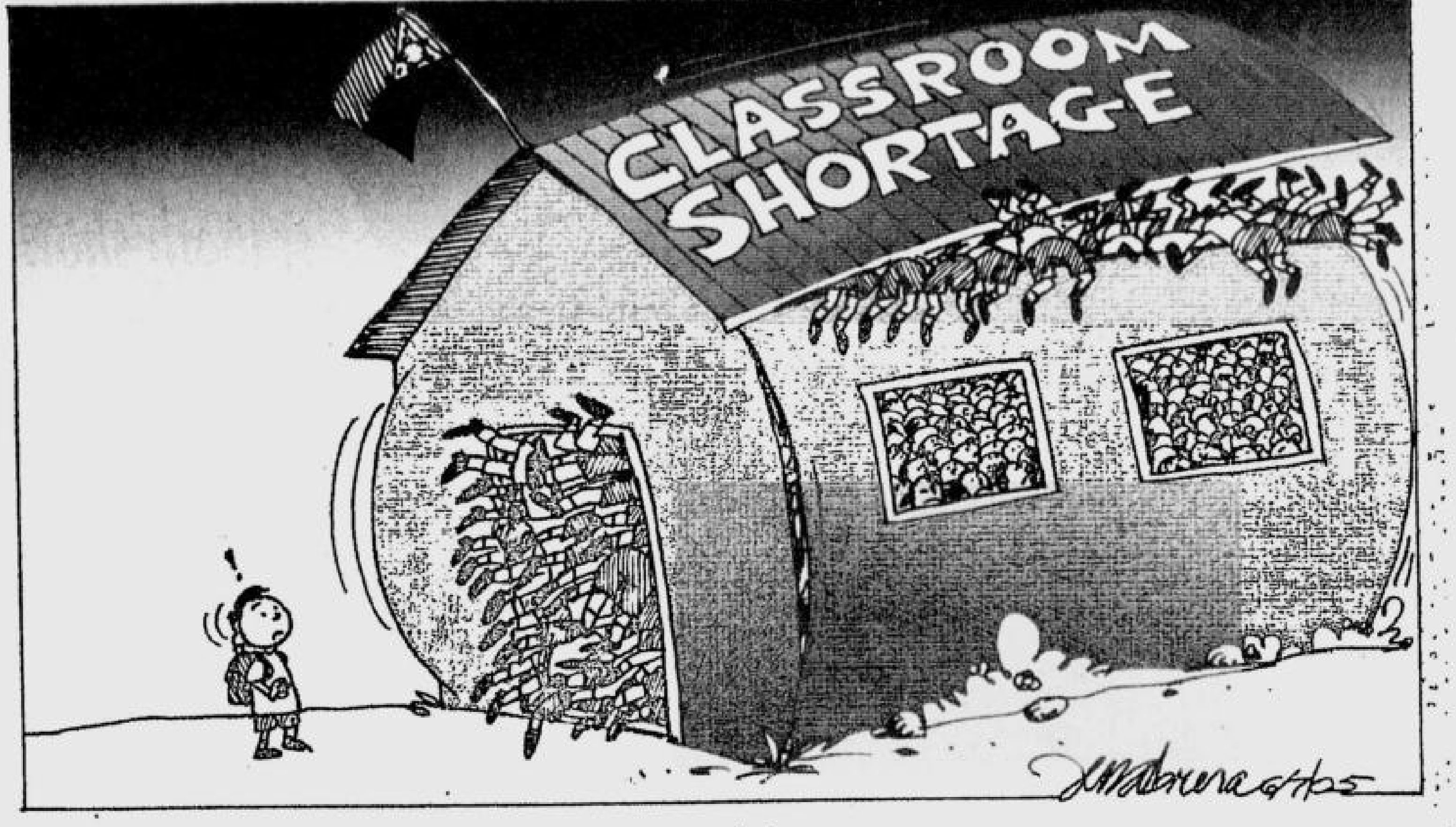


Education for life

EDITORIAL

THE OPENING of classes this month should prompt educators and government officials, particularly those in the executive and legislative departments, to reexamine the nation's educational system.

At this time, the focus is often on the number of classrooms that have been built, the number of desks and chairs provided and the number of books purchased, etc.

But more than the physical facilities, what should be discussed is the quality of education that the system is giving our children. Is our educational system preparing our children for useful, productive and fulfilling lives?

The present system primarily trains students for employment. After their graduation, they look for jobs instead of putting up new enterprises. New graduates and the millions of unemployed need not look for jobs overseas if only students, at all stages of their education, could be taught entrepreneurship skills. When they graduate, they can set up enterprises that could give jobs to hundreds, if not thousands, of their countrymen.

It might be useful to study the advisability of adding one more year to the six grades of elementary school. The Philippines has one of the shortest elementary and secondary periods: 10 years. Other Asian countries give 11 to 12 years of primary and secondary schooling. More of the three Rs could be offered in the seventh grade, but it should also concentrate on entrepreneurship training so that students who drop out after grade school would be equipped to earn a living.

The teaching of English has to be improved to make our graduates more competitive in the world labor market. This does not mean that educators should drop the practice of teaching some of the subjects in the vernacular or in Filipino. Years of teaching have shown that there are subjects, like the social sciences, where students learn faster when they are taught in the vernacular or in Filipino.

The present system gives much importance to verbal/linguistic and logical/mathematical intelligences. Thus, the focus on the 3 Rs—'riting, reading and 'rithmetic. Of course, facility in the three Rs will adequately equip students for normal, everyday transactions and activities. But educators now recognize that there are other intelligences that can and should be developed and that can help a person attain success in his or her chosen field of endeavor. These are visual/spatial, musical/rhythmic, body/kinesthetic and interpersonal/intrapersonal. Those who are weak in verbal/linguistic or logical/mathematical intelligence should not necessarily be branded as dunces and doomed to failure and uselessness all their lives. It should be the task of educators to discover the unique intelligence of each individual and develop it so that he can live a full and useful life.

A review of the educational system should include a review of teaching methods. The traditional method is to require students to memorize tons of information and then rattle the data off without understanding. The abstract reasoning and logical ability of students are thus hardly developed. Studying is a drudgery, it is never fun.

If studying could be made fun, if it could be immediately made applicable to everyday situations, it could be more relevant for students.

Two recent examples show that this is possible. One example is that of the Filipino school children who won top prizes in an arithmetic competition in Ipoh, Malaysia. One of them mentally adds up the cost of her mother's cartload of groceries even before they get to the cashier. Another also adds up mentally purchases made by customers at their mini-grocery. These students show that arithmetic can be fun, and it can be immediately applied to everyday activities.

At the College of Education of the Western Visayas State University, students taking Education 109 (Community Immersion) presented their immersion activities in pantomime, songs and dances and other theatrical programs. Later, Dr. Lorrie Hammond of the California State University, who attended the presentation, said, "What we have seen represent a kind of heart, a kind of soul, a kind of community." Dr. Sherry Nichols of the University of Alabama said, "Your education is learning to be human together."

The comments of the American educators who observed the teaching at WVSU are instructive and our educators would do well to remember them. Education is not just about preparing students for jobs. It is about preparing them for life. The educational system has to have a heart and soul and should promote a sense of community and nationhood.

Damned legacy

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

UNSOLVED crimes, inept police and snail-paced justice bedevil citizens. Some therefore cheer death squads operating with impunity, as corrupt officials look the other way.

Esquadrones de la muerte are a "cheap price for order," anonymous Davao businessmen murmur, according to a report of Dow Jones Reuters. "Investment improved from stability," enforced by motor-cycle riding assassins, now a Cebu City fixture.

Kiwanis Club president Loreto Encorporado back-pedaled [illegible] a firestorm erupted, after Cebu Daily Ne [illegible] ther papers quoted him as saying that "[illegible] supported vigilante killings."

"No, no, no. The clu [illegible] no official stand," interjected Juan Miguel o [illegible] llego. Ironically, he chairs Cebu Kiwanis' search for outstanding city policemen. "This honest mistake is a very little thing."

Murder with a wink is a little thing? Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan thinks so. He didn't approve of abuses in the Eastern Visayas' anti-insurgency campaign. But deaths of civilians were "small sacrifices" for national security.

Caiphas, too, agreed. "It is expedient that one man die to save the nation," he told a Sanhedrin bent on crucifying an itinerant preacher from Galilee.

Some parrot Caiphas' willingness to lay down life. The lives of others, of course, not their own. Where their pocketbooks or career paths begin, the right of "criminals" to life ends, the Constitution notwithstanding.

It's "the human propensity to prop up teetering positions of privilege with the pain" of vulnerable people, writes Harvard University's Harvey Cox.

But the Fifth Commandment—"Thou shall not kill"—has not been repealed. Thus, Calbayog Bishop Jose Palma appealed to Palparan: "Stop the gripping fear that has descended on Samar." Cardinal Ricardo Vidal in Cebu and Davao Archbishop Fernando Capalla similarly objected.

The late Pope John Paul II taught "a culture of life." And a Buddhist, Thailand's revered monarch Bhumibol Adulyadej, spurned a "culture of death." The King assailed over 1,200 executions of "drug dealers" by death squads under Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra.

Death squads in Brazil, Haiti and Colombia often target squatters and street children. About 16 percent of those "salvaged" in Davao were between 13 to 17 years old, a UN Commission on Human Rights study notes. This massacre of youngsters has been one of the less obvious toll of death squads.

"Salvaging" was the Marcos dictatorship's shorthand for extrajudicial execution. Over 300,000 were "salvaged" during the "New Society," notes Amnesty International.

"The blood of your brother cries unto Me from the earth," Cain was told. But ours is a society that is hard of hearing.

Latin Americans use the term "desaparecidos" (disappeared). In George Orwell's chilling novel on dictatorship, "1984," the victim becomes an "unperson."

We've not seen the Samar head count. But over 180 corpses have littered Davao, Digos, Tagum and Tacurong. And unsolved murders in Cebu bolted to 59, since Mayor Tomas Osmeña, last December, offered P20,000 to any policeman who'd "permanently disable any criminal." Osmeña is coy about who he paid bounties to. The Kiwanis, we're sure, did not pick up the tab.

But corpses are only the more visible price tag that *esquadrones de la muerte* "stability" exact. Less apparent is the anaesthetizing of values that make for a humane society. Murder of others is shrugged off. "There are born victims, born to have their throats cut," Aldous Huxley once sneered.

Another is corrosion of trust in institutions. Cops amble through the motions of investigating killings—until the next murder. People come to see the police, not as their protectors, but as props for those in "teetering positions of privilege."

"Let's get this straight once and for all, gentlemen," Chicago Mayor Richard Daley snorted after the 1968 Democratic convention riots. "The policeman isn't there to create order; he is there to preserve disorder."

Some say the 1980s communist insurgency embedded a vigilante mind-set in Davao. But Cebu never had a tradition of *esquadrones de la muerte*.

Thus, part of Mayor Tomas Osmeña's checkered legacy will be a value system where prosecutor, judge and executioner are, like al-Qaida terrorists, rolled into one. *"Damnosa heriditas,"* Gaius wrote in the second century. Gunmen masked in black bonnets symbolize that "dammed heritage."

Coddling killers, even for a cause, creates a Frankenstein monster. In China's "Hard Strike" campaign against corruption, sentences were arbitrary and due process disregarded. Most of the 4,367 executed were poor.

The communist Sparrow Units of the 1980s used assassination "to help people." Between 1985 to 1990, communists here conducted pogroms like "Kampanyang Ahos."

It was paranoia. Innocent people were killed in the blood-letting, writes former rebel and UP student Robert Francis Garcia in his book, "To Suffer Thy Comrades: How The Revolution Decimated Its Own."

UP professor Walden Bello and Akbayan Rep. Etta Rosales believe they're on the communist hit list. Reds have executed former members who quit.

"Stop playing God," the wife of murdered former communist rebel Romulo Kintanar snapped at Commissar Jose Maria Sison, who justified the killing.

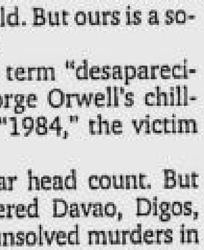
It is this track record that saps the credibility of local communists and their fronts baying about human rights. The wolf is crying wolf. That too is *damnosa heriditas*.

(E-mail: juan_mercado@pacific.net.ph)

Pain

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros



PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo says she can feel the pain of the nation but will not be swayed from imposing painful policies. "I feel pain when people feel pain. I ask for more patience from you because the pain we have to bear now will be the seed of our future economic stability and prosperity."

The last time I saw this kind of posturing was when Imelda Marcos also spoke of feeling the pain of the nation shortly before she and her husband were sent packing to Hawaii by a horde of their countrymen yelping in anger and, yes, pain. Not quite incidentally, both have referred to themselves as the mother of the nation, though GMA, probably aware of where that notion first came from, has also alternatively referred to herself as the nation's elder sister, Ate Glo. Which was mimicked by a comedian into Ate Glow, with such ironic resonance you are no longer always sure who is the original and who is the imitation.

Unfortunately for both Imelda and GMA, by the time they made a public show of experiencing empathetic pain, or maternal compassion for the nation, their credibility had taken an all-time dive. They had become caricatures of themselves, Imelda's tearful remonstrations before her countrymen's agony, which she did much to cause, no more elicited public sympathy than does GMA's furrowed-brow expressions of concern while surveying a land in the throes of disaster, the most disastrous of which being woman-made rather than God-made, to be found in her PCSO commercials. There are limits to the efficacy of acting as opposed to doing, as a full-fledged actor named Joseph Estrada found out some years ago.

The throwback to Imelda is especially apt. At no time since Imelda and Ferdinand has any Filipino leader stoked the fires of universal scorn than GMA. That is to go by the results of the SWS survey, which shows her approval rating to be the worst since 1986. We do not know what the Marcoses' approval rating was—there were no survey-takers then, or anyone who would openly pronounce the extent of their unpopularity. But it might not have been too far off from GMA's.

Ignacio Bunye, the Man With the Thankless Job, assigns the blame to GMA's unpopular economic policies. "Tough decisions to save the economy and the rise of oil prices beyond our call have taken their toll on the President's ratings."

Francis Escudero agrees from quite another perspective. GMA has only herself to blame, he says, because she did not listen when the opposition was warning her about the horrendous consequences of the expanded VAT. "When we opposed this, they said we were just politicking and were out to destabilize the government."

They both miss the point. Other Filipino leaders have made tough, and downright unpopular, decisions, but they have not been derided for it. In some cases, as in Juan Flavier's insistence on contraceptives against the fulminations of Jaime Cardinal Sin, they have even been praised for it. People do not mind tightening their belts or making sacrifices to accomplish noble, or just plain useful, ends. I have personally seen mechanics and drivers forego the most basic amenities to send their kids to school. The citizens as a whole will have no problems doing the same thing if they can see their leaders tightening their belts or making heroic sacrifices, too, to keep them afloat. But that is precisely what they do not see.

In lieu of tightened belts, what they are seeing in their leaders are widening girths, which in the case of Mike Arroyo is completely literal. In lieu of heroic sacrifices, what the citizens are seeing in their leaders are epic indulgences, as in $20,000-a-night suites. What has made GMA unpopular is the same thing that made the Marcoses unpopular. It is the very opposite of being able to feel pain, it is being *manhid* or *walang pakiramdam*. It is callousness, an indifference to suffering, an inability to glimpse the people's plight.

The problem is not government asking for more taxes, the problem is government asking for more taxes while burning money away like drunken sailors. The problem is not the people being made to grovel more in poverty, the problem is people being made to grovel more in poverty while their leaders bathe in luxury. You ask for more taxes, you are just Lee Kuan Yew. You ask for more taxes while tyrannizing the populace, you are the Sheriff of Nottingham. Sheriffs of Nottingham have a way of producing Robin Hoods.

Or for those who do not like metaphors, the problem is not government exacting more, it is government exacting more while giving less. Government is demanding more taxes while showing absolutely no sign it is giving them back. It can't even protect journalists, who are being routinely murdered by the day. It can't even give jobs to the desperate, who are routinely turning their gaze abroad or to a life of crime. Other countries experience high oil prices too and raise taxes too, but their leaders do not become objects of opprobrium in the eyes of the citizens.

But worse than our leaders not giving back our taxes in peace and order and education, they make them disappear without a trace in the bottomless pit of Jose Pidal's belly. The fact that this country has become the second most corrupt country in Asia simply means that its wealth is being systematically looted by its leaders. The citizens will be patient if they know the pain they are being made to bear will truly be the seed of their future stability and prosperity. But they can only be most impatient knowing the pain they are being made to endure will merely be the seed of their children's future misery and despair.

If GMA can truly feel the people's pain, she will resign. She has become the nation's pain in the… well, know your anatomy.

Boredom can kill Senate probe

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

THE SECOND Senate hearing on *jueteng* yesterday was dominated by the lengthy narrative of confessed payola fixer Richard Garcia, who said he was recruited by a PNP colonel named Pierre Bucsit, who was then "R2" in Albay, to fix *jueteng* operations in Region V and Mindanao. Subsequently, when Bucsit was transferred to Camp Olivas, Garcia said he was made to operate in Central Luzon. At some point, it was amusing to see the senators, led by committee co-chairs Manny Villar and Lito Lapid, as well as Senate President Franklin Drilon, seemingly getting confused just following the litany of names and places cited by Garcia. Villar kept asking him to go slower on the names, which included executive branch officials, governors, and ranking military and police officers, the most prominent of whom was the President's son, Rep. Mikey Arroyo. Even the PNP brass present seemed confused over the police officers cited.

* * *

One impression Garcia's testimony gave was how rampant and widespread *jueteng* has become. But under questioning by Sen. Aquilino Pimentel, Garcia admitted that he did not have direct knowledge of some of his claims. For instance, he deduced that Camarines Sur Gov. "El Rey" Villafuerte knew all about *jueteng* because his brother Bong was allegedly an operator. Likewise, he alleged that then PNP Gen. Reynaldo Wycoco was involved because his trusted aide, a Colonel Mabilin, was receiving P800,000 weekly. This falls in the same category as Boy Mayor's claim that he gave money to Mikey Arroyo's trusted aide.

Another witness claimed he had heard from a police officer in Bicol that he was being shipped out because the Bicol politicians, who were allegedly given the go-signal by a certain "Atty. Arroyo" to operate *jueteng* there again, were angry with this officer's anti *jueteng* campaign in the past three years. But still there was no smoking gun.

At one point, an exhausted Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile asked that all the local and PNP officials cited by the witnesses be summoned to the hearing, "so that we could get to the bottom of it all and finish the subject of *jueteng* once and for all." This, however, is the best way to kill public interest, dragging everyone to testify. If the second hearing was any indication, boredom will surely kill the probe.

* * *

Isabela Gov. Grace Padaca won the Isabeleños while campaigning against then incumbent governor Faustino Dy Jr., as she was perceived to be against all forms of vices there. But after only one year in office, she is already waving the white flag. She was quoted recently as saying she is for legalizing *jueteng*. What happened? Her critics allege that she is also on the take. I hope not.

* * *

I was abroad when several government agencies, led by the National Commission on Culture and the Arts, chaired by Ambeth Ocampo with executive director Cecile Guidote Alvarez, held a successful two-day "Cultural Summit on the Power of Arts & Media to Break the Cycle of Corruption, Poverty & Violence" at the ClamShell II Pavilion in Intramuros and the Manila Pavillion Hotel. I heard some artists were uptight about the summit, thinking that since the NCCA was active in the government's anti-corruption campaign, their independence would be "compromised."

I can understand their feeling, since artists have always been jealous of their independence. But the NCCA is right: culture has been a powerful tool in fighting evils in society. Note that the great Spanish painter Pablo Picasso depicted the horrors of the fascist bombing of Guernica, a town in Spain, in a huge painting showing twisted and mangled bodies. Rendered in Picasso's cubistic style, that painting is powerful beyond words. Michaelangelo also depicted the corruption in the Church during his time by consigning some ranking dignitaries to hell in the "Last Judgment." But we need not look beyond our shores. Jose Rizal fought the excesses of Spanish rule through his novels and poetry, which survived far beyond his own 33 years. Definitely, as the NCCA has been proving in the paintings of children and indigenous tribes around the country, culture can be a vital component in the fight against poverty, corruption and violence.

* * *

The family of the late Teodoro Benigno has requested that in lieu of flowers, donations be made to certain causes presumably he chose when he was still alive. Erda Technical-Vocational School (Erda Tech), a sister foundation of the Erda Foundation, where yours truly has served as pro bono volunteer PRO for many years, received a call from the Department of Foreign Affairs protocol office saying that Erda Tech is one of Teddyman's beneficiaries. I am not surprised. For our Francophone colleague doubtless had admired the lifelong crusade of 90-year old French-born (but Filipino citizen) Fr. Pierre Tritz, Erda's founder, to give children from very poor families a chance to get education and training. He has long maintained that these are necessary if the poor are to break the vicious cycle of poverty that has gripped their families for generations. Erda Tech trains impoverished students in various skills so that they could find jobs upon graduation from high school.

* * *

Father Tritz reports that in the past school year Erda supported 20,207 children at the elementary level, at a cost of P1,500 per child; 1,682 children at high school level, at a cost of P2,500 per child; and over 250 pre-school kids, at a cost of P32,000 per class of 25 kids. He found out that the lack of kindergarten or preschool was one of the reasons poor children drop out in the early elementary years. The DepEd has no pre-school classes, owing to a lack of budget, which is why Father Tritz admires the example of Mian Añover and her lawyer husband Gig, who put up two pre-school classes for very poor families in San Pedro Tunasan in Laguna. I wrote about the Añovers' project last month and since then a lot of financial funding for their poor students have gone their way.

Journalist and patriot

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

IT WAS Pastor "Boy" Saycon who reminded me that Teodoro "Teddy" Benigno was the first member of the Edsa People Power Commission (EPPC) to pass away.

Indeed, memories of Edsa and the years of struggle that preceded it were very much on my mind during the Mass and necrological services sponsored by the Foreign Correspondents' Association of the Philippines (Focap), which Teddy founded, last Sunday. Much of this was due to the familiar faces at the Magallanes memorial chapel, many of whom had become familiar to me as a reporter for the "alternative" newsweekly Veritas, then part of the so-called "mosquito press" that emerged in the post-Aquino assassination years.

For us working in the alternative media, Teddy Benigno was something of an icon. He was a "legit" journalist, being at the time bureau chief of the Agence France Presse, whose work assured us that covering the Marcos regime from a critical point of view wasn't amateurish ideological journalism, as the Marcos minions claimed it was. His presence among our ranks, sometimes right in the middle of protest marches or indignation rallies, assured us that we were living up to the highest standards of our profession.

Fr. Archie Intengan, S.J., who said Mass, cited Teddy's "passion" in everything he did—his writing, his avocations, his family life, but especially his love for country. It was our fortune, as younger journalists and fellow Filipinos, to have known Teddy Benigno as a journalist, columnist, public servant and civic leader. He will be missed, and not just by his family and friends.

* * *

CERTAINLY a piece of good news is the awarding to the Philippine pavilion at the Aichi, Japan World Expo 2005 of the Gold Prize for pavilion design.

Marian Pastor Roces, who conceptualized the pavilion for the architectural firm of Ed Calma, says she's proud of this rare recognition not just for the "thrill of a win," but also because it's a vindication of their decision "to put forward dimensions of the Philippines which have not been given too much attention."

In an e-mail to friends, Marian says that instead of harping on the usual "folksy and cute…touristy confections," she decided to focus on "utter refinement, (bringing) in our extraordinary gold work, distilled essences like ylang-ylang scent, etc."

As Marian explains it: "Instead of competing with the big and spectacular, it seemed appropriate to focus on the tiniest material (dragonfly wings, iridescent bugs like *salaginto*, miniature basketry, the acts of kindness of our caregivers)—make the point that the largest structures in the world, such as coral reef and overseas contract workers, are created by the smallest but often quite beautiful increments. Instead of the exotic clutter, I went with Ed's instinct to present austere space. (In Tagalog, the word is '*payak*' or succinct.) We 'filled' this basically empty space with a film with no narrative—only a sequence of images that move slowly—projected on three walls and the ceiling. Director Butch Perez did a wonderful job of giving us a three-dimensional 'movie' consisting entirely of music and visual transformations."

* * *

MOST important for her personally, adds Marian, was the juxtaposition of "natural and cultural material," for example, "some of the most breathtaking butterflies from the National Museum collection, with old, transparent *piña* cloth embroidery—to draw attention to the obvious inter-relationships (and) convey a sense of the similarity, for example, of our NGO work, our family system, the finest of our artwork, and what remains of our biodiversity."

To Marian, the recognition by the World Expo jury means that these complex ideas and interrelationships were not just understood but also appreciated, "in the arena of global excellence." The World Expo theme, by the way, is on alternative futures and one of the materials the Philippine pavilion was able to showcase was geotextiles, which Marian describes as "weavings made of coconut coir, kilometers long. We produce millions of tons of coir which we used to throw away as garbage. A Filipino bio-engineer thought to use the coir, in the process giving an alternative income to coconut farmers (as you know, the poorest of our farmers). The geotextiles are used for covering whole eroded mountains to stop further erosion. The new forest growth is protected by the weave. And when the growth is strong enough (in about five years) the coco coir decomposes and becomes fertilizer."

Geotextiles from the Philippines are now in use in such places as Mongolia, China, Japan etc. to arrest desertification, among other uses, says Marian. Another reason to be proud not just of the Philippine pavilion, but of the produce of our land.

* * *

ALSO another source of pride for the Philippines at the World Expo, although not too many Filipino visitors may be aware of it, is the Sony Dream Theater, the world's largest digital cinema. The Dream Theater uses an invention called the Grating Light Valve, now marketed by Sony as the GxL. It was made by Filipino engineer Paco Sandejas together with his professor and a former fellow graduate student at Stanford University. In fact, Paco and his family were invited by Sony to the Expo's opening last March precisely to view the practical application of his invention.

Paco says that the Sony general manager of the Global House where the Dream Theater is located is a former head of Sony Philippines who has many happy memories of the time he spent in the country.

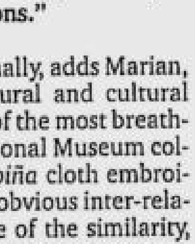
Since the Expo runs until September, there's still time for those whose travel plans include Japan to place Aichi in their itineraries, if only for the infusion of national pride guaranteed by a visit.

Congratulations to both Marian and Paco!

Different strokes

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper



IT wasn't only the Chinese who traveled along the trade routes of Asia in those by-gone centuries shrouded in mystery. There were Japanese traders as well who explored the northern and western shores of Luzon.

When Legaspi established Manila, the Japanese emperor sent an envoy to declare that Japan had as good a right to the domain as Spain. The Japanese ambassador demanded the surrender of the Spaniards and threatened an invasion. Fortunately, cooler heads prevailed and they decided on a treaty of commerce instead.

However, since Spain was ruled by a somewhat fanatical king called Philip, there was a covert plan to convert Asia to Roman Catholicism. When the Spanish trade mission arrived in Japan some time in the 17th century, a member of the party was a Franciscan friar who sought and got permission to remain and build a church. Naturally this didn't sit too well with the Portuguese Jesuits who were there ahead and weren't too happy with the Franciscan intrusion into what they must have considered their bailiwick. The quarreling between these two orders finally reached the ears of the emperor who was also informed that the treaty of commerce was merely a cover-up for missionary work and the Franciscans' true purpose was revealed.

Luckily the emperor didn't get too excited and contented himself with merely issuing a decree forbidding foreign priests from interfering with Japanese religious practices. Whatever passed through the missionaries minds regarding the seriousness of the implied threat, it didn't faze them at all and they continued their work, forcing the emperor to have them arrested and jailed. Finally he got tired of their "zeal" and deported them aboard a Portuguese vessel.

The organizer of this scheme, Pedro Bautista, returned to Manila long enough to catch his breath and promptly created an even bigger expedition than the first, before heading back to Japan. You can imagine the ire of the emperor at being defied, in his own country at that. Another decree was fired declaring all Franciscans under arrest, including Bautista and all converted Japanese. A considerable number of priests had their noses and ears cut off (I can't quite see the connection between cutting off noses and ears unless there's some kind of obscure symbolism) before being condemned to death on the cross. (There's a perfectly gorgeous oil painting of this martyrdom in Spain even if it isn't quite the thing for a living room wall.)

Manila was understandably upset, and a special commission was sent to Japan to recover the bodies of the martyrs (although the Japanese may have called them something else). The emperor didn't much care one way or another what the pesky foreigners were doing about the bodies that had become dismembered, with some pieces carted off as relics, and gave his permission. Whatever remained was placed in a box and sent to Manila on a vessel that disappeared, possibly to the bottom of the ocean. The whole expedition was an unmitigated disaster from the point of view of diplomatic relations, but a grand success for martyrs. (It may have taken half a millennium, but we got St. Lorenzo Ruiz for all those efforts.)

The emperor fired off an interesting letter to the governor general explaining that he had no quarrel with the religion of the Spaniards. There were many forms of religion and one more didn't make any difference (this must have raised quite a number of religious eyebrows). What he objected to were foreigners in his country trying to subvert Japanese beliefs and convert his people to a religion of another land, which if you think about it, was definitely rather impolite, they being guests and all. Would the governor general consent to have the Japanese propagate their religion and laws in the Philippines or in Spain for that matter?

Needless to say the governor general didn't answer, but incredibly this still didn't stop further efforts to convert the Japanese. Several more missionaries went disguised as merchants and suffered the same fate (martyrdom may have been on their agenda anyway). Finally they pushed too hard and the Imperial Court expelled and excluded all Christians from Japan once and for all.

It finally occurred to the Spanish authorities that sending these idealistic priests over was a virtual death sentence and the practice ceased, leaving the "heathens" to their fate. All those who had lost their lives in the mission of spreading Christianity were declared saints and martyrs by the pope through a special bull.

In a gesture brimming with sarcasm, the emperor who must have been good and tired of all those proselytizing efforts sent a shipload of 150 lepers to Manila with a note stating that since the priests had such a liking for the unfortunate, they could have them. It was for these unfortunates that San Lazaro Hospital was built outside the walls of Intramuros. It was later transferred to a property on the Jesuits' Hacienda de Meyhaligue.

My comfort zone

YOUNG BLOOD

Jennifer Marie Yu

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

LIKE thousands of other young people, I have finished another chapter in my life, and I'm looking forward to the next. It's college, and at the moment, I know nothing about where it might take me in the next four years. Right now, there is nothing I can do but wait until that journey starts. And until then, I have some time left to dwell on my past.

Everything seems to be unpredictable right now. All I know about my future is what course I am taking, but finishing it isn't even a sure thing, since a lot of people tend to shift courses. I tell myself that I can do it, and no matter what happens, I'll do my best and finish what I will begin. Be confident, strong and trust in yourself, I say to myself.

However, even that doesn't seem enough. Most people who have gone through a similar experience will understand how this constant fear about the future can overwhelm you. Oftentimes, it changes your perception of things. I went through this, but later realized that it would be better to cross the bridge when I get there. For a time, I thought that knowing all the obstacles you have to face in the future may help, but actually it often does not. It is letting other people's negative experiences affect you that pulls you down and makes you lose your self-confidence. So it is better to look at ourselves and make sure we're well-equipped to hurdle any obstacle that may come our way.

I found that my strengths came from my past. In the eyes of a lot of people, I may just be another 17-year-old who has finished high school. But looking deeper within myself, I have found that those 17 years have already given me so many lessons that can help me negotiate the road ahead. Thirteen out of those 17 years, I've spent in one school. And it's to the school I owe almost everything I know.

I've spent more than three-fourths of my life in just one school. Since I was a puny five-year-old, the Immaculate Conception Academy has been my second home, my comfort zone. When I first went there, I knew almost nothing about the world, or how it worked. I didn't understand most things, and I never thought that I would ever have the passion to learn anything.

But that was more than a decade ago. Graduating 13 years later, I feel very much like someone who knows what I have in myself and what I can do, someone who is ready to use that knowledge to have a great future.

ICA, being one of the country's top secondary schools, taught me a lot. While I was studying there I felt that my brain wasn't being wasted since it was learning so many things. Now I feel confident that I am well-prepared to face the bigger world. Even though I was not one of the top students, I got such a good education that I managed to pass the admissions test to all the four universities I applied with.

But aside from my academic preparation, ICA also taught me about the real world, something I didn't expect to learn so much about in school. It guided me every step of the way, teaching me all I needed to know.

The school also served as my second home for 13 long years. I will never forget the times when we walked along its corridors and hung out behind its gates after school, where we would cram for the next day's tests and do assignments. I will never forget our teachers, some of whom made us smile, while some made us almost cry with the heavy load of work they put on our shoulders every single day.

I will never forget all the memories we shared, all the experiences we had and all the lessons we learned from each hurdle we had to overcome. In leaving my alma mater, I found that it is not just the knowledge and the direction it gave me that I valued, but much more the memories and lessons it gave me along the way. As my favorite teacher once told our class, "Our goals are important, but what is more important is the journey we make to reach it, because it is that journey which actually makes us stronger."

Yes, I've reached one of my goals: I've finished high school. But looking back, it is actually the journey to that goal that I value more. Along the way, ICA gave me the passion to learn and showed me what I needed to do in my life. It made me realize that I have to make a difference and do something I can be proud of. Furthermore, it taught me to be careful in making decisions and to make sure that whatever I do is the right thing to do. Most of all, it made me realize the things that are truly important and gave my life direction. In short, my journey with my alma mater is priceless and irreplaceable.

Facing the world today, I feel strong and confident, knowing that my alma mater has equipped me well and given me a firm foundation. I cannot ask for anything more. I believe that I have what it takes to conquer the future, no matter how difficult it might prove to be. I cannot imagine being in a different situation than the one I am in now, and I cannot ask for a better second home.

Jennifer Marie Yu, 17, graduated from the Immaculate Conception Academy in San Juan, where she wrote for the school paper, the Icalettes. She is an incoming BS Management Engineering freshman at the Ateneo de Manila University.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

If you are sending your contributions by e-mail, please address it to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address and information about your age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with.

THEY SAID

Clandestine world

"I've lived for 30 years in the clandestine world. If my application for asylum causes the United States problems, I will withdraw it."

—Cuban leader Fidel Castro's bitter opponent Luis Posada Carriles, when arrested hours after Castro led a march by Cubans demanding the US to extradite the veteran militant who has been accused of terrorism.

Queenly

"Not-so-ordinary way your President carries herself, the way she sits, the way she walks—quite queenly, really."

—The Lake Constance Foundation project manager Patrick Trotschler on President Macapagal-Arroyo

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Exploitation of Filipino nurses in Canada

THE MUCH sought after greener pasture is not the case for Filipino nurses migrating to Canada. Due to mounting costs and discriminatory immigration and accreditation requirements, their only option to enter Canada is through the Live-in Caregiver Program (LCP). The LCP recruits nurses and other trained professionals, mostly (93 percent) from the Philippines, to work as domestic workers in Canada, oftentimes for less than minimum wage, since they are required to live in their employers' homes and are "on call" 24 hours a day. This can amount to as little as $2 per hour since they must live in their employers' homes and can be expected to work anytime during the day and night. Many perform unregulated nursing duties for the elderly, sick and people with disabilities of Canadian families who can afford to pay for private, round-the-clock health care and housekeeping.

The exploitative situation of Filipino nurses trapped under the LCP is a clear example of systemic racism that allows affluent Canadian women to play at being liberated at the expense of Filipino nurses' cheap labor. The LCP further privatizes Canada's health care system, providing a cheap substitute to affordable and accessible health care for all.

Unfortunately, the Philippine government encourages this exploitative situation as it facilitates the out-migration of Filipinos through its Labor Export Policy. Currently, over 8 million Filipino migrant workers are scattered in over 186 countries worldwide, representing 10 percent of the national population. Filipinos are commodified as highly skilled, but cheap labor on the global market. Together, this exported Filipino labor remits an average of $7 billion into the ailing Philippine economy every year. Nurses make up a growing share of the rising numbers of Filipinos sold to countries around the world by its own government. More and more Filipino doctors are even taking up nursing courses as their ticket out of the country.

While it's nice to hear examples of success stories of immigrant Filipino nurses in the United States, the collective struggle of Filipino nurses doing domestic and 24-hour home support work in Canada needs to be known by the Philippine government and the Professional Regulation Commission, Board of Nursing since they can also play a role in ensuring the professional growth, instead of the de-skilling, of Filipino nurses in Canada.

—SHEILA FARRALES,
Filipino Nurses Support Group,
Vancouver, Canada,
fnsg@kalayaancentre.net

CAMP Aguinaldo sidewalk undergoes renovation

Time for another snap election

ALL the difficulties that President Macapagal-Arroyo is facing with respect to her performance and popularity ratings may be traced to a litany of flaws in the way she became President.

To begin with, she was proclaimed President at Edsa under a cloud of constitutional doubt. Probably sensing that it was unprincipled for her to run as incumbent President, she promised not to run, but she got tempted and ran anyway, lavishly spending for the elections with questionable funding.

She won and has held the reins of the nation—but not without the weight of 50 percent of the Filipinos thinking that she cheated. In other words, she has all the time been governing with a very weak mandate and with a string of political paybacks tying her hands from performing a sincere job as a President. It would be interesting to watch if she could fight *jueteng* convincingly.

The Filipinos would have gladly been with the President through all difficulties, including the fight for higher taxes, if she had endeared herself to them. But because of her doubtful mandate, she can't but run the government poorly, and this has caused her a falling-out even with those who supported her in the past elections.

It is a real cause for concern that the government is on shaky ground with an all-time low rating for a Filipino President. The government has become vulnerable to a power grab, and with the current *jueteng* scandal, there is nothing in sight that will reverse its decline.

Rating poorly as well because of corruption, the military is the last that the people would like to see taking over the reins of government, or to ask support from in another Edsa revolution. Therefore, there seems to be a very negative forecast for another successful repeat of people power.

Before the nation is thrown into political uncertainty and chaos, the best that can be done at this point is a call for a snap presidential election, where GMA should be disqualified to run. It is the only orderly way we can immediately install a new president with a genuine mandate.

—ADI BAEN SANTOS,
108E F. Roxas St.,
Caloocan City

A courageous archbishop

CONRADO de Quiros' column, titled "Comparisons" (PDI, 6/2/05) would be worthwhile reading for the working populace—in government and private outfits.

The Catholic in us may wince and tell De Quiros it is odious to compare Archbishop Oscar Cruz with our beloved Jaime Cardinal Sin. But I agree with De Quiros in commending Archbishop Cruz for his courage and leadership in leading the crusade against *jueteng*.

It is worthwhile to reflect on "why" Archbishop Cruz decided to spearhead this crusade with all its complications and controversies. Why is it important to address the *jueteng* issue now? How has this issue developed in our leaders and people blurred vision on ethics and responsibility, and on truth? Indeed, the prelate's crusade is a lonely road to trek with all sorts of traps.

Archbishop Cruz has given leaders an example—that if one genuinely loves his country and his people, he'd muster all energies and talents to oppose and reverse all factors contributing to the rot this country has been battling to free itself from. *Mabuhay ka* Archbishop Cruz!

—MA. CHRISTINE F. LIWANAG,
machristine_liwanag@merck.com

A worthy AFP project

THIS refers to the news item titled "AFP defends P19M sidewalk renovation." (PDI, 5/9/05) Some people are making a big issue out of it when there is really nothing to fret about it.

It is for the military commander to improve the camp of which he is the administrator. If there are available funds for the project, then why not? This would be better because the money is spent for the proper project and is not wasted on corruption.

I think it is high time that we stopped embarrassing the Armed Forces of the Philippines, finding fault in its every move. There are already misconceptions that the AFP does nothing but usurp power and devour funds—which aren't all true and baseless.

Would it not be good to have a beautiful, clean, orderly and impressive military camp that we can be proud of, especially when foreign dignitaries and army chiefs pay a visit?

Camp Emilio Aguinaldo is one of our country's landmarks. With the renovation of its pavements and other projects lined-up for its beautification, we should all be happy that the AFP has the initiative to improve the conditions of the camp, knowing fully well that these would benefit soldiers, veterans, employees and other people transacting business inside the camp, especially those who have no vehicles.

I think this ongoing camp renovation is a worthy project.

—JOSE B. AGBAYANI JR.,
Bahay Torro, Project 8,
Quezon City

Emergency meetings now held at malls?

CONRADO de Quiros' column, titled "Drunk with power" (PDI, 5/31/05) hit a lot of people squarely. Almost every day we encounter convoys and cars with their sirens and blinkers on.

The last time I checked, only the President, Vice President, Senate President, House Speaker, Chief Justice and emergency vehicles are authorized to use those gadgets. But just last week, on Edsa, I encountered a white Mercedes Benz SUV with a "6" license plate on my way from work. The two motorcycle escorts did their best to snake through traffic on the north-bound lane of Edsa-Shaw just to let the convoy through, to the extent of fully blocking lanes and forcing vehicles there to a full stop.

After being forced to the side just so "His Royal Highness" could pass through, I proceeded to my destination in Ortigas Center. Lo and behold, when I passed by The Podium Mall near SM Megamall, the convoy was parked right outside (with the cars and motorcycles blocking the drive way, of course). Are emergency meetings of national concern now conducted at Starbucks after working hours?

—VINCI JAYME,
v_jayme@hotmail.com

Proud Catholic physician

THE COLUMN "Morally superior" by Ms Rina Jimenez-David upset me. She questions the "judgmental morality" of some surgeons because they refuse to "perform procedures they find morally repugnant." She was of course referring to NSV or no-scalpel vasectomy.

In a predominantly Catholic country such as ours, who is the guardian of morality? The Catholic Church, of course. And for us Catholics, we very well know that, according to the teachings of the Church, artificial family planning methods, such as vasectomy, are against the laws of God. Morality is not subject to public opinion. It is a constant in the interpretation by the Catholic Church of the Word of God. Ms David even goes further by saying, "What is more immoral after all, having more children than one can feed or educate?" Who now is trying to sound morally superior?

Imagine doctors who do not follow their conscience in the treatment of their patients. The main theme of the Hippocratic oath is to practice medicine with the highest moral standards. When they face their Creator, these surgeons whose actions Ms David questions will answer "Lord we followed your commandments because of our love for You!"

I am a surgeon myself and am proud of having been taught the art of surgery by Dr. Arturo de la Peña, who is indeed a highly skilled and competent surgeon. I studied in UP and had my residency at the UP-PGH, not UST. But I, too, am proud to be a practicing Catholic! That may give one second thoughts about making sweeping statements.

—LOUIS V. LIMJOCO, MD,
16 Carmelite lane,
Lucena City

Oil in our everyday lives

I READ with interest Conrado de Quiros' take on the virgin coconut oil. The salutary effect of oil on the human body has been an open secret for sometime now. In Italy, men are known to drink a jigger of virgin olive oil every meal. A Filipino priest here in California takes two tablespoons of peanut oil every evening after meals. And my wife is an avid fan of Udo's Choice Oil Blend (a combination of oils supposed to be rich in Omega3, flax oils, etc); while I take the lowly cod liver (fish oil) in capsules every day. And it works for me, as it does for my wife, and as it does for our priest-friend, as it does among Italians. Obviously, Pinoys have discovered—and are beginning to take to—the local virgin coconut oil. No matter in what form it comes, oil (the controlled intake of it) is good for the body—good for joints and good for battling the day's fatigue, not to mention its euphoric effect of just feeling good about yourself. I say, go for the oil, no matter what form it is in (so long as it's not processed cooking oil).

—LINO ALDANA,
Irvine, California,
adaldana@uci.edu

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INQBOX

What do you think should be done to some top government and police officials accused of receiving huge amounts of jueteng money?

nagsalita
na ang
masa!

if only there s a law to hang them alive, mas maganda in a public place!
—romy cabatuan, 52, *butuan city*

they shud be investigated. if guilty, they shud pay d price lyk ordinary criminals bcoz they have betrayed da trust of da Filipin0 pip0l.
—Karen oreiro, 21, *orm0c city*

pwede ba kung anong ginawa kay Erap, ganon din lang muna. Para malaman natin kung parehas ba ang batas.
—Boyet s. lim, 45, *Pob.Lupon, Davao Or.*

they shud be given 100 lashes each in public. dat shud shame them,
kung may kahihiyan pa cla!
—justin urquico, 64, *bislig city*

iF PROVEN GUILTY, they should be KICKED OFF their posts, RETURN MONEY EARND from govt. & JUETNG 2 Be PAID 4 our FOREIGN DEBTS.
—Neil Jerome, 16, *Laguna*

severe punishment and remove them from their positions if proven guilty.
—mary joan preclaro, 24, *antipolo city*

dey shud b castrated so their kind wont spread. Our country needs honest and nationalistic leaders
—Carissa Sheila G. Pilapil, 19, *Sorsogon City*

they should be tried & if found guilty, they should be fried!
—marco bernardo, *baguio*

imbestigahan na yan!!, sana lang walang TAKIPAN na mangyayari sa imbestigasyon para magkaalaman na!!!
—JULIE UY, 50, *COTABATO*

LET THEM SHOULDER D TUITION FEE & other EXPENSES of POOR students!!!
—Flobin F. Garbin, 19, *Sorsogon*

shoot them.
—trudis sapitan, *malolos, bulacan*

TAX those greedy pigs instead of the hardworking middle class
—juliano, 35, *cebu*

strip them, including their family, 0f all their wealth. Make them live & suffer from p0verty.
—teena brutas, 20, *Laguna*

subject them to lifestyle check, if proven guilty, strip them from their positions and have them serve time.
—mary joan preclaro, 24, *antipolo*

dey shud be punished by death thru firing squad. its also because of them our country could never be graft n corrupt-free.
—Katrina, 17, *zamboanga city*

Dey SHUD be removed from office then D govt SHUD freeze all their accounts. This will ensure dat dey wud suffer as much as d victims.
—monette rosello, 21, *quezon city*

Undeserving public officials like jueteng benefactors deserve to be axed out from their posts.
—Elma G. Selvido, 36, *Bataan*

dapat munang patunayan na tumanggap nga sila, pero kapag toto0!, tanggapin din nila na sila'y matatanggal sa serbisy0.
—Ritchie, 32, *compostela*

Mas magandang I-present lahat ng accused official sa lahat ng media at sabay sabay. But 4 sure ARROYO FAMILY. r not belongs.
—Lexsan Sancha, 23, *Victoria, Laguna*

These officials must be suspended frm deyr respective positions until & after deyr names are cleared. Meanwhile fair investigation needed.
—Kal- Kausar S. Kadil, 15, *Zamboanga City*

praise em 4 their initiative & reward em 4 dr industry. We nid ppol like em 2 pay our huge debt.
—Rolando p, *sinajon, digos city*

as president said she is very much in control of the situation ! Cant u understand !
—gilbert lee, 44, *qc*

investigate and throw dem in prison if need be, der shud be no sacred cows, no one shud be spared of this.
—Hermie Y. Balingit, *san Fernando cty.*

dapat malapitan, mahingan ng pera! joke!!! dapat i-congratulate MAYAMAN na sila e.
—richard sobrepeña, 26, *sn jose ct, n ecija*

send these corrupt officials to Mindanao n let d Abus teach them a lesson or two on suffering!
—limuel abrogena, *isabela*

dapat patunayan ng mga nagaakusa at kung mpatunayan na totoo, dapat ipalasap sa mga nagkasala ang BANGIS ng BATAS!!
—Jeffry dumanjog, 19, *cotabato*

They shud be SUSPENDED FROM THEIR POST 2 pave the way 4 A FAIR HONEST & UNBIASED INVESTGATION BY A FAIR HONEST & UNBIASED BODY.
—Neil Jerome, 16, *Laguna*

Get them out of their high positions. 2nd, treat them as ordinary citizens. 3rd, charge them in court.
—Jose A. Chang, 39, *Fairview, QC*

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PCSO says lotto now killing 'masiao'

By Jhunnex Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—Lotto operation in the Visayas and Mindanao is killing the illegal numbers racket called "*masiao.*"

This after the online lottery operated by the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) enjoyed a 29.22-percent increase in revenues in the first five months.

William Medici, PCSO manager for Visayas and Mindanao, said lotto sales went up to P1.5 billion compared to the P1.1 billion reported over the same period last year.

Medici attributed the increase to the popularity of the three-digit number game called "Suertres" lotto and the 6/45 mega-lotto.

He said Suertres had been the PCSO's fast selling game since it was introduced on June 13, 2002.

Medici said masiao bettors had been patronizing Suertres because it was easy to win compared to the usual six-digit numbers game of the online lottery.

Besides, he said, bigger money prizes were at stake compared to the masiao. For a bet of P10 in Suertres, the bettor could win P4,500 compared to P4,000 prize for a P10 bet in masiao.

Besides, Medici said, Suertres results were based on a legitimate draw compared to masiao, which did not have any clear basis for its winning numbers.

"You can see that 3-D (three-digit) has contributed a lot in the fight against masiao because instead of going to masiao, people are now patronizing our 3-digit game, and besides, its draw is daily," Medici said.

The PCSO reported P406 million in sales for the Suertres lotto from January to May, just P122 million short of the P528 million in total sales of the three-digit numbers game in 2004.

For the 6/45 mega lotto, PCSO recorded P422 million in sales for the same period. The amount was already over 50 percent of the P816 million in total mega lotto sales in 2004.

In 6/45 mega lotto, the bettor selects his number-combination from 1 to 45.

The PCSO has other number games, such as 6/49 Super-lotto and 6/42 lotto, which are also doing well in sales, said Medici.

Last year, the PCSO earned P2.7 billion in the Visayas and Mindanao. This year, the target is P3.2 billion in sales.

"I am very confident (the PCSO would) even exceed this target," Medici said.

MAS MALAYO YATA ANG MARARATING NG SAMPUNG PISO KO DITO!
P10

Philamlife Offers Special Programs for OFW Families

The Philippine American Life and General Insurance Company (Philamlife) is the largest and most diversified insurance company in the Philippines and the undisputed market leader for over half a century. It offers the most comprehensive range of life and general insurance products that provide protection, savings and investments, education and personal accident coverage. Philamlife has more than a million individual and corporate policyholders, and maintains the most extensive network of offices and sales agencies nationwide. Philamlife is known to be the market leader when it comes to life insurance. After more than 56 years of serving the financial needs of the Filipino family through products that cater to a breadwinner's protection, a child's education, a family's health or a retiree's pension, the company has opened new avenues to cater to special markets - like the overseas filipino workers. As a result, the Philamlife OFW Market Department (OFWMD) was created. Established in 1998, the Philamlife OFWMD has been the driving force in Philamlife's efforts to understand and serve the growing OFW population worldwide. Recognizing the invaluable contribution of OFWs, the OFWMD embarked on a mission to come up with specific products and services required to cater to the unique consumer behavior of OFWs. More than providing insurance products, various activities and programs have been developed to give greater value to their OFW clients. Here are some of the programs that have been implemented by Philamlife:

Balikbayan Buddy Program
Balikbayan Buddy was made available to all eligible Duty Free Philippines Fiesta Mall shoppers last July '04 up to March '05. The program provided a free 2-week personal accident coverage in the amount of P25,000 to DFP shoppers as a welcome home gift from Philamlife.

OFW Family Days
OFW Family Day is a special event organized and sponsored by Philamlife with some of its affiliates and external partners. Held mostly in the provinces, OFW Family Day brings together OFW clients of Philamlife, together with their dependents, to enjoy a fun-filled and learning experience through games, contests and value-driven seminars and workshops. The biggest OFW Family Day was held last November in Lipa City, where more than 500 OFWs and their dependents attended the event.

Wealth Management Forums for OFWs
Philamlife has partnered with the Overseas Workers' Welfare Administration (OWWA) to bring a financial planning forum entitled 'Wealth Management for OFWs'. The forum provides the basic concepts of wealth management in simplified terms that OFWs and their dependents can appreciate and put into practice. The objective is to educate the audience and introduce to them the proper way of managing their money. So far, wealth management forums have been conducted in Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, La Union, Bataan, Baguio, Manila, Batangas, Bicol, Cebu, Iloilo, Bacolod and Davao.

Career Orientation Program
Philamlife's Career Orientation Program (COP) for OFWs addresses the need for re-integration of overseas Filipinos who have decided to come home for good. As a result, there are many able-bodied workers who can still perform but lack job opportunities upon returning to the country. By presenting sales as an alternative career, OFW returnees have the choice of continuing to earn substantial income and be with their families at the same time.

For inquiries about Philamlife's Special Programs for OFWs, please contact the Philamlife OFW Market Department at 526-9315 or 526-9380 up to 381, or email philamlife.ofwmarket@aig.com.

Family Day sa Cavite

Wealth Management Forum sa Cebu

Libreng Kodakan sa Duty Free

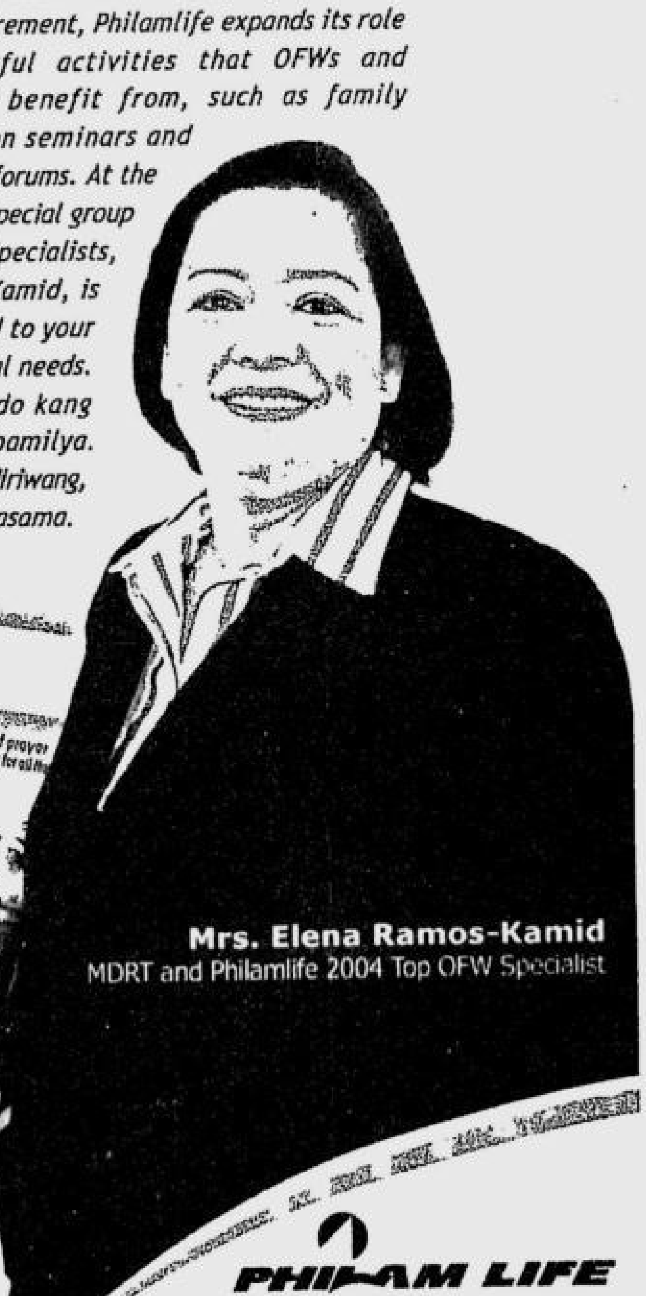
Wealth Management Forum sa Vigan

Career Orientation Seminar sa Pangasinan

Family Day sa Isabela

Sa Philamlife, Bida ang OFW!

Philamlife has always put great importance on customer orientation and concern for people. To address the various financial concerns of one of the most valuable sectors of the country, the OFW Market Department of Philamlife was created 6 years ago. More than providing products focused on meeting a specific need such as life protection, education, health or retirement, Philamlife expands its role by providing meaningful activities that OFWs and dependents alike can benefit from, such as family days, career orientation seminars and wealth management forums. At the forefront of all these, a special group of highly-qualified OFW Specialists, like Mrs. Elena Ramos-Kamid, is ready to help you attend to your family's overall financial needs. Malayo ka man, sigurado kang alaga namin ang iyong pamilya. At sa susunod naming pagdiriwang, sana ikaw ay aming makasama.


Mrs. Elena Ramos-Kamid
MDRT and Philamlife 2004 Top OFW Specialist

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Plan to privatize blood bank opposed by Red Cross members

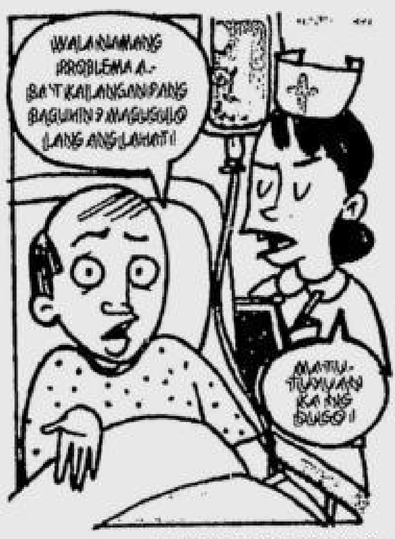

WALA NAMANG PROBLEMA A- BA'T KAILANGAN PANG BAGUHIN? MAGUGULO LANG ANG LAHAT!
MATU- TUNYAN KA NG DUGO!

ILLUSTRATION BY STEPH BRAVO

TUBLAY, Benguet—Members of the Philippine National Red Cross in Benguet are complaining about a plan to remove management of the national blood bank from the humanitarian organization so it can be privatized.

Mayor Nestor Fongwan, cjair of the PNRC chapter in Benguet, said the proposal had been an open secret for sometime now, but PNRC officials have not been transparent about it.

The effect of the purported plan is that the 84 PNRC chapters and nine subchapters will lose control over 74 regional and chapter blood centers, which supply hospitals and private clinics.

Questions

"We don't understand why [PNRC] needs to create a new body to handle blood when the chapters have been taking care of [securing and maintaining safe blood] for years," Fongwan said.

"We were told that it was approved by the PNRC board of governors, but PNRC chapters have not yet received any formal document [directing us to relinquish control over our blood banks]. We were not even consulted," he told the INQUIRER on Monday.

The PNRC board of directors discussed the proposal in April when President Macapagal-Arroyo visited Tiblay, Benguet, said Albert Tacio, PNRC-Benguet chapter board member.

Corruption

Many chapters have opposed the move because a privatized blood bank may open social services to corruption, said lawyer Concepcion Luis, another chapter board member.

"It is apparently being proposed that we create a foundation to run the national blood bank, but that may be used for political gain. Imagine the power [a politician will hold] if he [or she] can win votes because he holds the key to supplying blood to the needy," she said.

Sen. Richard Gordon, PNRC chair, has not acted on the proposal, Luis said.

"Removing the blood bank from the PNRC will leave the organization without a major stake in public services."

Complications

Creating a new blood bank administration will also complicate the humanitarian network in the Philippines, "because people already know that [actress] Rosa Rosal [prominent spokesperson of the PNRC] is (the leader of) the group to call when they need blood," she added.

Republic Act No. 7719 encourages blood donations, but it also establishes "the legal principle that the provision of blood for transfusion is a professional medical service and not a sale of a commodity." *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

DOJ dismisses appeal of dam operators to defy local gov't

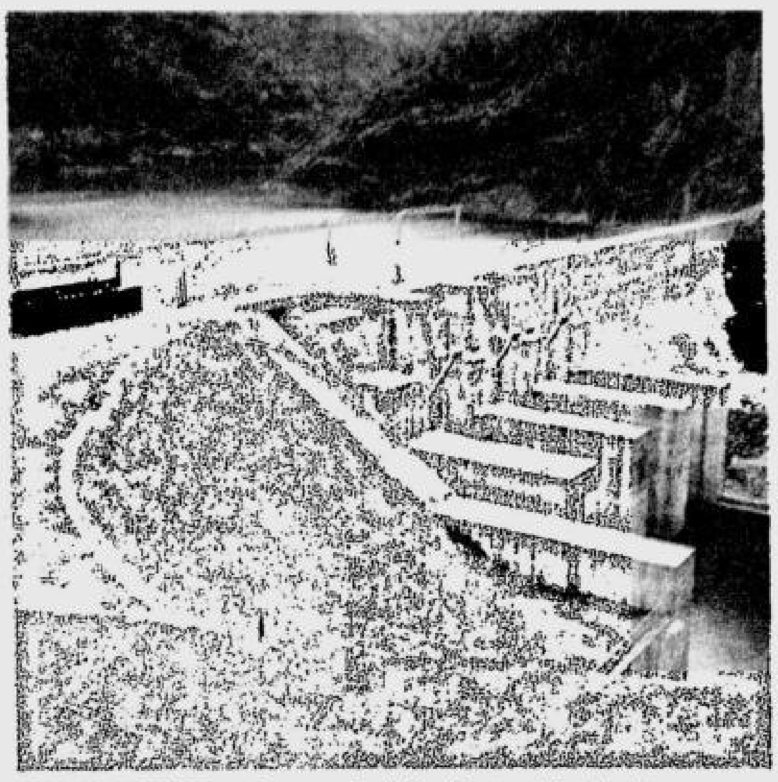
By Melvin Gascon
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya—The Department of Justice has dismissed the appeal filed by an independent power producer which tried to avert its impending closure by the local government due to unpaid taxes.

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez junked the appeal of California Energy Casecnan Water and Energy Co. Inc. (CE Casecnan), which questioned the legality of an ordinance enacted by the municipal government of Alfonso Castañeda.

Ordinance 53 requires the company to first secure a clearance from the provincial government before it is issued a business permit for the operation of the Casecnan multipurpose power and irrigation project (CMIPP).

Located in remote Pelaway village, about 150 km from here, the CMIPP is composed of two dams that impound and divert water, through two tunnels, from two rivers in Nueva Vizcaya to the Masiway power plant in Barangay Villarica in Pantabangan, Nueva Ecija.



THE CASECNAN project now finds itself in trouble after its operators failed to comply with the ordinance passed by the municipal government. PDI PHOTO

The CMIPP generates some 150 megawatts of electricity and irrigates an additional 30,000 hectares of land in Central Luzon.

The provincial government has refused to issue the required clearance to CE Casecnan due to the company's unpaid real property taxes, which now amount to P248 million.

CE Casecnan filed the appeal with the DOJ when then acting Alfonso Castañeda Mayor Jerry Pasigian ordered on Jan. 21 the closure of CMIPP for lack of a permit to operate.

The company averted the CMIPP shutdown when it filed an injunction with the court. It was able to obtain a temporary restraining order, which eventually lapsed on Feb. 10.

In dismissing the appeal filed on Jan. 27, the DOJ cited lack of jurisdiction over the controversy and the failure of the company to file its protest against the municipal ordinance on time.

"The authority of the secretary of justice is confined to deciding only questions involving the constitutionality or legality of tax ordinances or revenue measures raised on appeal within 30 days from its effectivity," the DOJ decision said.

Ordinance 53 is not a tax or revenue measure, the DOJ said, but one that was enacted for "regulatory purposes." Moreover, the company questioned the ordinance 51 days after its passage.

The INQUIRER tried but failed to reach for comment lawyer Linda Castillo, CE Casecnan vice president for legal and corporate affairs. She did not respond to INQUIRER's text messages.

El Niño ruins P194M in crops in Davao Oriental

MATI, Davao Oriental—Some P194 million worth of crops, such as coconut, corn, rice, banana, vegetables, cassava, coffee and mango, were destroyed by the El Niño phenomenon in the province, making it the hardest hit in Southern Mindanao.

At least six of the 11 towns in Davao Oriental were severely affected by the dry spell which started in January. These were Tarragona, Lupon, San Isidro, Banaybanay, Govenor Generoso and the capital town of Mati.

At least four towns were placed in a state of calamity, according to Luz Jayson of the Provincial Disaster Coordinating Council.

Ricardo Gofredo, provincial agriculturist, said his initial assessment of the damage had already reached P193.9 million.

At least 13,234 hectares of coconut plantations in Mati, Governor Generoso and San Isidro had been damaged, he said. Some 10,000 coconut farmers were affected, he added.

Davao Oriental is the country's largest coconut producer with an annual average output of 250,000 metric tons.

Gofredo, however, said corn was the hardest hit among the crops. At least 4,880 hectares of corn plantations in six towns have been severely damaged, he said. Ferdinand O. Zuasola, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Governors of 8 provinces on 3 islands dream of bridges

By Romy G. Amarado
PDI Visayas Bureau

DUMAGUETE CITY—The governors of the eight provinces of Negros, Cebu and Panay have agreed to explore the possibility of erecting bridges that will link the islands, agreeing in principle to set aside part of their Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) for the project.

Oriental Negros Gov. George P. Arnaiz, in a press conference held here last week, said the governors of provinces in Central and Western Visayas initially discussed the project during the meeting of the League of Provinces in Manila last week.

The project was jointly initiated by Negros Occidental Gov. Joseph Marañon and Arnaiz.

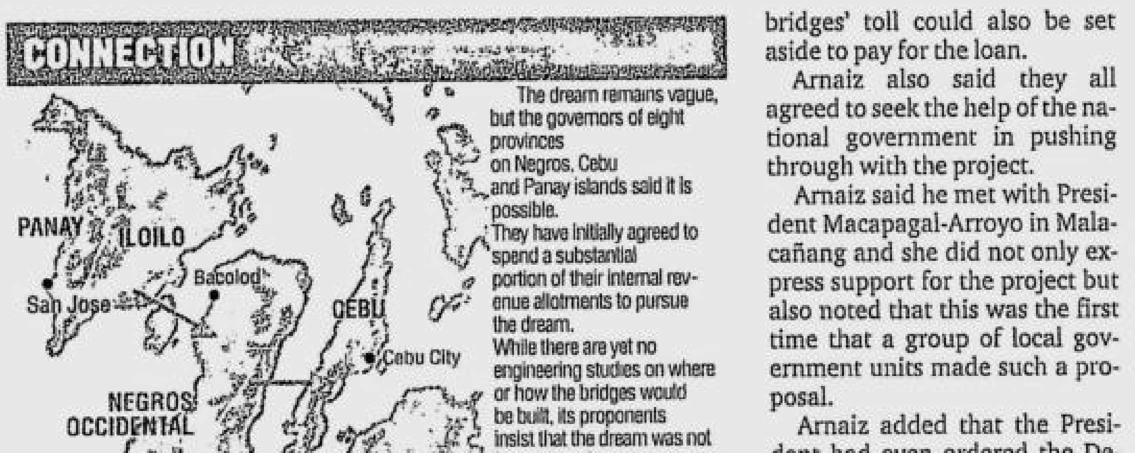
"Governor Marañon and I talked about the possibility of constructing bridges that would link the islands of Panay, Negros and Cebu. When we brought the matter to the governors of Cebu, Iloilo, Capiz, Aklan, Antique and Guimaras, everybody was excited," Arnaiz said.

Iloilo, Capiz, Aklan and Antique—which are all on Panay Island—the island-province of Guimaras and Negros Occidental are under Western Visayas (Region 6). Oriental Negros and Cebu are part of Central Visayas (Region 7).

Arnaiz said that if the project materialized, they could expect more robust economic activities involving the two regions.

Arnaiz said their consensus was to construct a bridge linking Panay and Negros, and another bridge that would link Negros and Cebu.

Arnaiz also said the governors agreed to borrow money from international funding institutions, such as the KFW Bank of Germany and the Asian Development Bank, to finance the project.



CONNECTION

The dream remains vague, but the governors of eight provinces on Negros, Cebu and Panay islands said it is possible.

They have initially agreed to spend a substantial portion of their internal revenue allotments to pursue the dream.

While there are yet no engineering studies on where or how the bridges would be built, its proponents insist that the dream was not beyond reach.

The idea, according to one governor, is to build a bridge between Panay and Negros and another between Negros and Cebu.

Each province will set aside at least P20 million yearly to pay for the loan. The money will be taken from their IRAs.

He said the proceeds from the bridges' toll could also be set aside to pay for the loan.

Arnaiz also said they all agreed to seek the help of the national government in pushing through with the project.

Arnaiz said he met with President Macapagal-Arroyo in Malacañang and she did not only express support for the project but also noted that this was the first time that a group of local government units made such a proposal.

Arnaiz added that the President had even ordered the Department of Public Works and Highways to look into the possibility of conducting a feasibility study on the proposal of the governors.

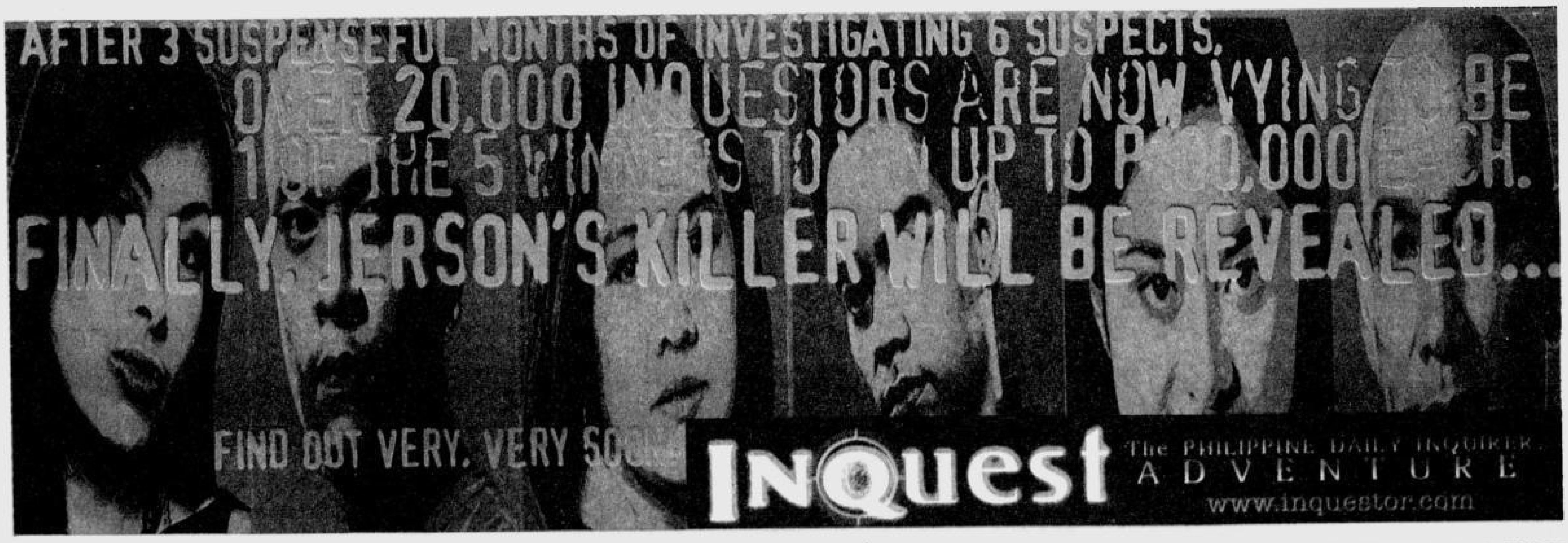
He said that if the national government did not have money to conduct the feasibility study, the eight provinces would contribute to finance the study.

Local execs back reforms of Gloria

A GROUP of local government officials expressed confidence that President Macapagal-Arroyo would succeed in her economic and political reforms with the support of local government units and the people.

In a statement, Samar Gov. Ben Evardone, spokesperson of the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines (ULAP), said the support for Ms Arroyo's reforms was clear during a series of consultations with LGUs and other groups of local government officials.

He said the LGU officials also supported Ms Arroyo's call for a constitutional convention for constitutional amendments amid a clamor for a parliamentary system among many LGUs.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INQBOX

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'Jueteng': Father-son affair

MAYOR

MAGLANQUE

NAGUIT

From page A1

the second and third witnesses brought to the Senate by anti-jueteng crusader Archbishop Oscar Cruz.

In more than one hour of testimony, Garcia—who said he was a former member of the Philippine Constabulary—outlined his operations as bagman for police officers in Regions 3 (Central Luzon) and 5 (Bicol).

In the process, he linked "Attorney Arroyo of Malacañang," Mikey and Iggy Arroyo to jueteng operations.

'Blessings from the top'

A nervous-looking Riva, for his part, said he was a bagman for former Presidential Assistant for Bicol Affairs Mario Espinosa.

Riva said Espinosa told him he had the "blessings" of the First Gentleman to operate in Bicol.

Garcia said he decided to come out because he could "no longer stomach" the shabby treatment police officers were getting from politicians, who threatened to have them removed from their posts if they stopped jueteng in their areas.

Riva said he decided to testify after receiving death threats.

The hearing was marked by a confrontation between Mayor, on one hand, and, on the other, Representative Arroyo's alleged bagmen, former Vice Mayor Arturo Naguit and former Assistant Transportation Secretary Rene Maglanque.

Both Naguit and Maglanque denied allegations linking them to jueteng.

Mayor had previously said he passed on to Naguit protection money amounting to P600,000 monthly intended for Mikey.

Money for HK trip

Countering Naguit's denial, Mayor claimed they met at the Holiday Inn hotel and it was there that Naguit supposedly asked for P150,000 for a trip to Hong Kong by Mikey, then Pampanga vice governor.

During his testimony, Garcia portrayed himself as a toughie who would not hesitate to kill if confronted by armed jueteng rivals. He said he was now facing frustrated homicide charges after shooting one of them.

Garcia outlined a long trail of jueteng operations in Bicol and Central Luzon, firing off about 100 names of civilian, police and private individuals involved in the operations.

Some senators and reporters ended up almost dizzy following his recitation. Garcia also narrated how he and some police officers dabbled in illegal logging, illegal fishing and smuggling.

Man from Malacañang

The name of "Attorney Arroyo" came up in Garcia's testimony when he recounted how then Camarines Sur provincial director Col. Bienvenido Latag was threatened with reassignment after he suspended jueteng operations following a tiff with Bong Villafuerte, the eldest son of Camarines Sur Rep. Luis Villafuerte.

"What will we do? Attorney Arroyo called," Garcia quoted Latag as telling him.

When inquiry co-chair Sen. Manuel Villar asked who Attorney Arroyo was, Garcia said: "I don't know. All he [Latag] said was it was Attorney Arroyo *ng* Malacañang."

"He called Colonel Latag because he wanted jueteng to resume and that was what happened. Jueteng was resumed," Garcia said.

Who is Lion King?

Elsewhere in his testimony, Garcia referred to Mikey Arroyo.

That was when Garcia said he and Senior Supt. Pierre Bucsit handled operations in Pampanga.

He said Bucsit told him not to worry about working in another jueteng operator's turf.

"He said, 'No problem. It was the Lion King who sent us here.' What I know is that [Vice] Gov. Mikey Arroyo, now Congressman Mikey Arroyo, is the Lion King," Garcia said.

Iggy Arroyo's name cropped up when Garcia spoke of operations in Region 5.

Name of Pidal

"For the region, the one who was getting [the payola] up to now *ay si* Sandra Cam because there is an order coming from Malacañang," Garcia said.

He said this was the information given him by the police regional intelligence chief, Senior Supt. Rene Gumban.

Gumban also supposedly told him: "We know that the one who put Cam here is Pidal, who is Congressman Iggy Arroyo."

Riva, an employee of a pre-need firm from Rawis, Daraga, Albay, was next to testify. He said he was the bagman of Espinosa.

Riva said during a meeting with an alleged jueteng collector in Bicol, in which he was present, that Espinosa asked the man to give him a list of payola recipients in the area.

"Mario said, 'Give me the breakdown because I have to show it to the First Gentleman because it was the First Gentleman who gave me his blessing here in Bicol,'" Riva told the senators.

4 collections a month

Riva said he collected jueteng money every 8th, 16th, 22nd and 30th of the month and delivered this to Espinosa. He said he collected P7,500 from Camarines Norte, P12,500 from Camarines Sur, P15,000 to P20,000 from Sorsogon. He said he delivered the money, P140,000 a month, to Espinosa at his apartment where Espinosa allegedly lived with his common-law wife, Lily.

Riva said Espinosa was so adamant about collecting the money.

"If Mario Espinosa is around at 5:30 a.m. he would knock on my door to get the collection. That is how greedy he is," Riva said.

Last year, Riva said he went to the National Bureau of Investigation to report the threats he had received and to disclose that Espinosa had linked Mike Arroyo to jueteng in Bicol.

Fear for life

Riva said he had second thoughts about talking about Mike Arroyo because he was afraid of what would happen to him, and he came out only after hearing about Archbishop Cruz.

Garcia said that after leaving the police service, he became involved in jueteng, first as supposed bagman of Senior Supt. Mel Mabillin.

He said he delivered P800,000 a week to Mabillin and a certain Colonel Tanggo allegedly with the blessing of then Director Reynaldo Wycoco, who was chief of the National Capital Region.

In 2002, he said he met Region 5 intelligence director Senior Supt. Pierre Bucsit, who allegedly gave him the "go-signal" to operate in the region by arranging payola for police officials.

Garcia said he also arranged the operations for Camarines Sur, where he met police director Senior Supt. Roberto Ronggavilla and Art Katigbak, alleged "emissary" for Bong Villafuerte.

Cahoots Club

It was at the "Cahoots Club" in Quezon City where Garcia said he, Ronggavilla and Katigbak agreed to raise a P350,000 payola for Region 5. He said he left it to Bucsit to allocate the amount for various protectors.

He said he also arranged P200,000 a week payola for Camarines Norte.

Garcia said a quarrel with the Villafuertes led to the removal of Senior Supt. Bienvenido Latag from the region.

"Father and son wanted us axed," he quoted Latag as telling him.

"The father and son were no other than Congressman Luis Villafuerte, Governor Villafuerte and the son Bong Villafuerte," Garcia said.

In the hearing, *barong*-clad Maglanque and Naguit vehemently denied they personally knew Mayor or received jueteng money from him.

Angels better than lawyers

Sen. Panfilo Lacson asked the committee to make a special note that the two were accompanied by lawyers who quietly coached them behind their seats while Mayor, Garcia and Riva only had Archbishop Oscar Cruz with them.

"A guardian angel is better than lawyers," he said.

"I have not seen him my whole life," Maglanque said, saying Mayor only used him to implicate his friend Mikey.

Mikey: I'm not Lion King; witness is Liar King

From page A1

he was unperturbed.

"We will continue to answer and effectively debunk whatever charge they hurl on us regarding jueteng," he said.

Legal options

President Macapagal-Arroyo's elder son, who postponed his US trip last week to confront allegations against him, vowed he would never let the "perjury go unchallenged."

"We are looking at what we can do to hold them accountable for their statements in the Senate. We asked our counsel to examine all options and focus on answering the new accusations hurled by the new jueteng witness foisted by the opposition," he said.

Congressman Arroyo said he had instructed lawyer Grace Maduramente to examine his legal options.

He specifically referred to Mayor as "a perjurer, convicted felon and small-time jueteng hustler."

Camarines Sur. Rep. Luis Villafuerte denied that he and his two sons, Gov. Luis Raymond Villafuerte and Mariano Jose "Bong" Villafuerte, were behind "jueteng" operations in their province.

The elder Villafuerte said Garcia was another witness "planted" by opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson who wanted to get even with him.

Smear campaign

"This is a well-planned and orchestrated attempt to smear my family, myself and my children," Villafuerte said.

The congressman said Garcia linked him and his sons to jueteng because he had earlier called Mayor a "political hatchetman" of Lacson.

"I'm prepared to face the Senate any time. We are not hiding anything," Villafuerte said.

He said he had never met or heard about Garcia until yesterday, adding that his sons were also prepared to appear before the Senate.

Villafuerte said he "absolutely had nothing to do" with the transfer of Chief Supt. Rodolfo Tor, who was the regional director in Bicol in 2002, as alleged by Garcia.

He said he had also talked to his son, Bong, to clarify the accusation that he had visited a police camp and physically confronted a senior officer there. He said his son denied it.

Singson

Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson said allegations that he was a jueteng protector in northern Luzon "are part of a demolition job on me."

"Sen. Jinggoy Estrada, one of the biggest recipients of jueteng payola during his father's presidency, tried very hard to link me to jueteng. They also saw how witness Garcia could only answer the senator's question by repeating the old story about my reported involvement," Singson said.

"I regret that some members of the Senate panel have become party to the lie by circulating alleged lists of jueteng payoffs that they themselves admitted were supplied by anonymous sources and were, at best, uncorroborated and unsubstantiated."

Singson said efforts to link him to jueteng were intended to destroy his credibility as a principal prosecution witness in the Estrada plunder trial.

Senior Supt. Roberto Rongavilla, on his part, said that there was nothing irregular in his transfer from Camarines Sur, where he once served as provincial commander, to Metro Manila.

Garcia a stranger

"I was never kicked out from Camarines Sur as claimed by this Garcia, who remains a stranger to me. I never had a nasty fight with Mr. Villafuerte," he told the INQUIRER.

His transfer, he said, was done in accordance with the "regularity in the performance of duty."

Garcia had said Rongavilla was removed from his post when he got into a fight with Bong Villafuerte.

Interior Undersecretary Wencelito Andanar said he had never received jueteng payola, disputing Garcia's testimony.

Andanar said: "I don't know the guy ... I have never engaged in any jueteng activity nor do I intend to do so."

"I am a faithful follower of Islam. To engage in any form of gambling ... is against my religion."

In Pampanga, Senior Supt. Pierre Bucsit denied that he supervised the collection of protection money for police officials and Representative Arroyo, as Garcia had claimed.

Researcher

Bucsit, in an interview, confirmed meeting Garcia in 2002 while he was still the regional intelligence and investigation chief of the Bicol regional police.

"He walked into my office and volunteered to help in intelligence gathering," Bucsit said, adding he "used" Garcia as a "researcher" in illegal gambling operations.

"I know him but I have no involvement whatsoever in illegal gambling," said Bucsit, now intelligence and investigation chief of the Central Luzon regional police.

Chief Supt. Rowland Albano, who assumed the Central Luzon police command on Dec. 25, 2004 until May 1 this year, denied collecting jueteng payoffs and distributing these on a 40-60 percent sharing scheme between some regional police officials and some national police officers and politicians.

Bucsit reassumed the post when Albano was relieved on May 1 and was replaced by Chief Supt. Alejandro Lapinid.

On Monday, Lapinid clarified he did not suspend Bucsit over Garcia's allegations. Lapinid said he had requested Senior Supt. Artemio Icban to act as his regional intelligence and investigation chief in May. Icban, he said, started reporting to him on June 1.

"What did he say?" said Police Director for Plans Rodolfo Tor. "If he implied or said (I received jueteng money), I deny it."

Tor said when he was police chief of Bicol, he in fact was relentless in going after jueteng operations, adding he did not condone illegal gambling in his territory. "I conducted many antijueteng operations there," he said.

Chief Supt. Jaime Lasar, former Bicol police chief and now head of the Police Community Relations Group, also denied the implication that he was on the take when he was head of the Bicol police.

Carpet-bombing

"I can tell you that I never received any jueteng money, or money from any other illegal activity for that matter," he said.

National Bureau of Investigation Director Reynaldo Wycoco yesterday described the accusations of his alleged involvement in the jueteng scandal as "carpet-bombing, part of Senator Panfilo Lacson's demolition job against me."

"This is a good chance for somebody I know to unleash weapons of mass destruction," Wycoco said in a press briefing, referring to Lacson.

Negros Occidental Rep. Ignacio "Iggy" Arroyo viewed Garcia's testimony as an attempt to discredit the Arroyos.

"I don't know him. I don't think he knows me either," Iggy Arroyo said.

He dismissed allegations that he had a hand in the appointment of provincial directors in Bicol, saying: "We [legislators] have nothing to do with that."

"Clearly, there's an attempt to drag all Arroyos, to really malign all the Arroyos," he said. *With reports from Luige A. del Puerto and Margaux C. Ortiz; and Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

NBI witness provides comic relief in probe

From page A1

Rizalino "Saling" Serilla, who claimed to be a jueteng facilitator in Albay, drew peals of laughter from the senators as well as from the gallery with his conflicting, if not self-incriminating, testimony.

During the hearing, for instance, Mayor disclosed that Serilla had been a jueteng bagman of a top NBI official in Legazpi City. Serilla, 60, did not dispute Mayor's allegation.

Mayor, the jueteng operator in Albay then, said he sacked Serilla from his job for dishonesty and negotiated directly with the NBI official regarding his monthly payoff.

'Poor me!'

Serilla admitted he had traveled all the way from Legazpi to testify against Mayor for removing him from the jueteng operator's payroll.

"Poor me," Serilla said in Filipino, drawing laughter from the senators.

Asked by Sen. Jinggoy Estrada if he would have testified had Mayor not fired him, Serilla replied: "I guess not, sir." Another burst of laughter.

Questioned by Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. if anybody paid for his trip to Manila to testify against Mayor, Serilla replied: "Oh, that would have made me cheap. But that would have been fine with me, if that were true." Again, the spectators broke into laughter.

NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco had earlier said that Serilla would tell senators that Mayor was not in a position to give hefty payoffs to bagmen of the President's son, Pampanga Rep. Mikey Arroyo, lawmakers, governors, mayors and police officials.

Straight to the point

After demanding the same immunity accorded to Mayor at last week's hearing, Serilla went straight to the point.

"I've come here to deny all his (Mayor's) lies. We're mere facilitators and we just get one percent from the capitalist. I don't know how he could have given payola to people," the NBI witness said.

Questions by senators, however, exposed holes in Serilla's testimony.

Sen. Panfilo Lacson, for instance, asked Serilla how he came to know that a still unnamed senator had paid Mayor P5 million to testify in the Senate.

Serilla admitted he had no personal knowledge of the P5-million bribe.

The Mayors

"In Daraga [town in Albay], however, that's a big story," the NBI witness replied. "Even Boy's relatives are spreading this. There were also speculations that Boy could have accepted the money because he and his family were no longer in the area. But I know Boy, he just doesn't accept P5 million. At first, you would believe such a story because even his relatives are the ones saying this."

Pressed by Lacson to identify Mayor's relatives, Serilla replied: "The Mayors. All those who carry the family name Mayor."

Amid laughter from the gallery, Lacson thanked Serilla and declared he was through with the witness.

Asked to comment on Serilla's testimony, Mayor said Serilla wasn't even a facilitator but a mere gofer of a jueteng manager in Castilla town in Sorsogon. Serilla's take from jueteng operations, according to Mayor, was P150 a day.

"If he really was a facilitator receiving one percent a month from jueteng operations (in Albay), he would be making P900,000 a month," Mayor said.

"Ask his neighbors if his lifestyle is one of somebody making P900,000 a month," he added.

NBI 'asset'

Mayor said the fact that Serilla admitted not knowing any politician in Albay belied his testimony that he was a jueteng facilitator.

"If you're really a facilitator, you'd have to know the local and police officials for you to be effective," the confessed jueteng operator told senators.

Mayor said Serilla was not only a bagman but also an "asset" of an NBI official in Albay.

After the hearing ended, anti-jueteng crusader Archbishop Oscar Cruz said Mayor's testimony was stronger than ever.

And in an ironic twist to yesterday's hearing, another bagman accused NBI Director Wycoco of accepting jueteng payoffs when the latter was still head of the National Capital Region Police Office.

"Part of a destabilization plot," Wycoco said of the testimony. *(See related story on Page A1.) With a report from Norman Bordadora*

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Palace releases 2 CDs of 'bugged' GMA phone call

From page A1

posed election official.

The ABS-CBN's radio dzMM aired what it said was the taped conversation between Ms Arroyo and Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano during the counting of votes after the polls.

In the recording, Ms Arroyo asks the official whether her overall lead could fall below 1 million votes. The official replies that although her lead had fallen to around 900,000, votes from several towns had yet to be counted.

"We will do our best," he says.

The final election count by Congress in June last year gave Ms Arroyo a winning margin of just over 1 million votes over the late movie star and opposition candidate Fernando Poe Jr.

On Sunday, Bunye said the opposition had planned to release the tape within the next two days in a new bid to undermine the Arroyo administration. He had initially said he did not have the tapes but yesterday he appeared before reporters with two CDs of the supposed presidential conversations.

Plot 'most devious'

"The latest plot, by far the most devious and desperate, involves the illegal bugging of a conversation and the subsequent electronic doctoring, alteration and revision of that conversation so as to introduce elements that were not really there," Bunye said.

"We want to express our outrage that the phone of the President has been tapped," he said. "The President was illegally wiretapped, and this wiretapped conversation was spliced. It was the President's voice, but the voice on the other line was not a commissioner."

He said the "smoking gun" was being turned over to the National Bureau of Investigation.

The President has changed her cell phone several times during her administration to avoid having her calls intercepted, he added.

Also yesterday, an opposition group led by MD Rebueno of the Chrstian-Muslim Democratic Movement, made an audiovisual presentation at the Sulu Hotel, purporting to support a complaint last December by former Ilocos Sur Gov. Antonio Villanueva alleging that Ms Arroyo had falsified documents.

The presentation referred to Ms Arroyo's thumbmark which was reportedly small in her certificate of candidacy for vice president in 1998 and which became "almost twice bigger" in the papers she filed for last year's vote.

Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos said anyone who has solid evidence of electoral fraud should come forward.

"If they think they have concrete evidence, they should come to us so we can analyze if what they are saying is true," Abalos said in a phone interview.

PRESS Secretary Ignacio Bunye presents the altered and original CD copies of the supposed wiretapped conversation between President Macapagal-Arroyo and a political leader. EDWIN BACASMAS

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. urged Bunye to disclose details of the supposed conversation as speculation swirled as to who in the opposition was behind the tapes.

"Without the categorical replies from Mr. Bunye ... we in the opposition would find it difficult to make a credible rebuttal to his buckshot charges," Pimentel said.

Hilarious

Ronald Post, counselor for public affairs of the US Embassy in Manila, told reporters yesterday that the embassy had heard about the existence of the tape that some opposition elements in the Philippines said contained statements about the last election.

But Post said that since the tape had nothing to do with the United States, the embassy was treating the case as an internal Philippine matter. "We're not prepared to do anything about it," he said.

"We've not heard this tape. It did not come from the US government. We are open to hearing the tape, but it's not something we have any role in," Post said.

Anakpawis Rep. Crispin Beltran said that if found to be authentic, the tape could "blow a hole through the roof of this already weakened administration."

He said that "up to this day, a huge majority of Filipinos are still convinced that President Arroyo is not the real victor of the May 2004 polls."

Makati Rep. Agapito "Butz" Aquino jumped into the fray.

"If the tape is really damaging, who would benefit from that? The President could be impeached and it is the the Vice President who will replace her," Aquino said, referring to Noli de Castro. "I hope he is not a part of this or is not taking orders from somebody."

"*Nakakatawa naman 'iyan* (That's hilarious)!" said De Castro. He said while the Vice President could be a natural suspect in this case, he was not interested in sowing intrigue in the Palace.

"I'll just wait for 2010 and all those with presidential ambitions should wait for 2010," De Castro said. *With reports from Cynthia D. Balana, Dona Pazzibugan, Volt Contreras, Michael Lim Ubac, Philip C. Tubeza and Bernice Mendoza, AP and Reuters*

Cell phone firms dispute wiretap claim

From page A1

The executive noted that wiretapping was easier with the previous cell phone technology—analog—where a voice was sent through the network, unlike GSM, which transmits only digital computer bits.

Another executive of a rival firm said that illegal surveillance on a GSM could be possible if the recipient was taping the phone call or the wiretappers had a contact among the network's switch operators.

But then the wiretappers must also have the code of the call's recipient to decipher the call or message, the executive said.

No official comment

The country's leading telecommunication firms, Smart and Globe, have declined to make an official comment on the issue of security of their networks.

However, there are a lot of ways of tampering with an audio tape, according to Forensic Tape Analysis Inc. (tapeexpert.com). One can obscure inappropriate stops and starts in a recording by mixing in a different sound. One can also rearrange or add words or sounds to change content and context. One can also delete unwanted words and sounds by recording over them.

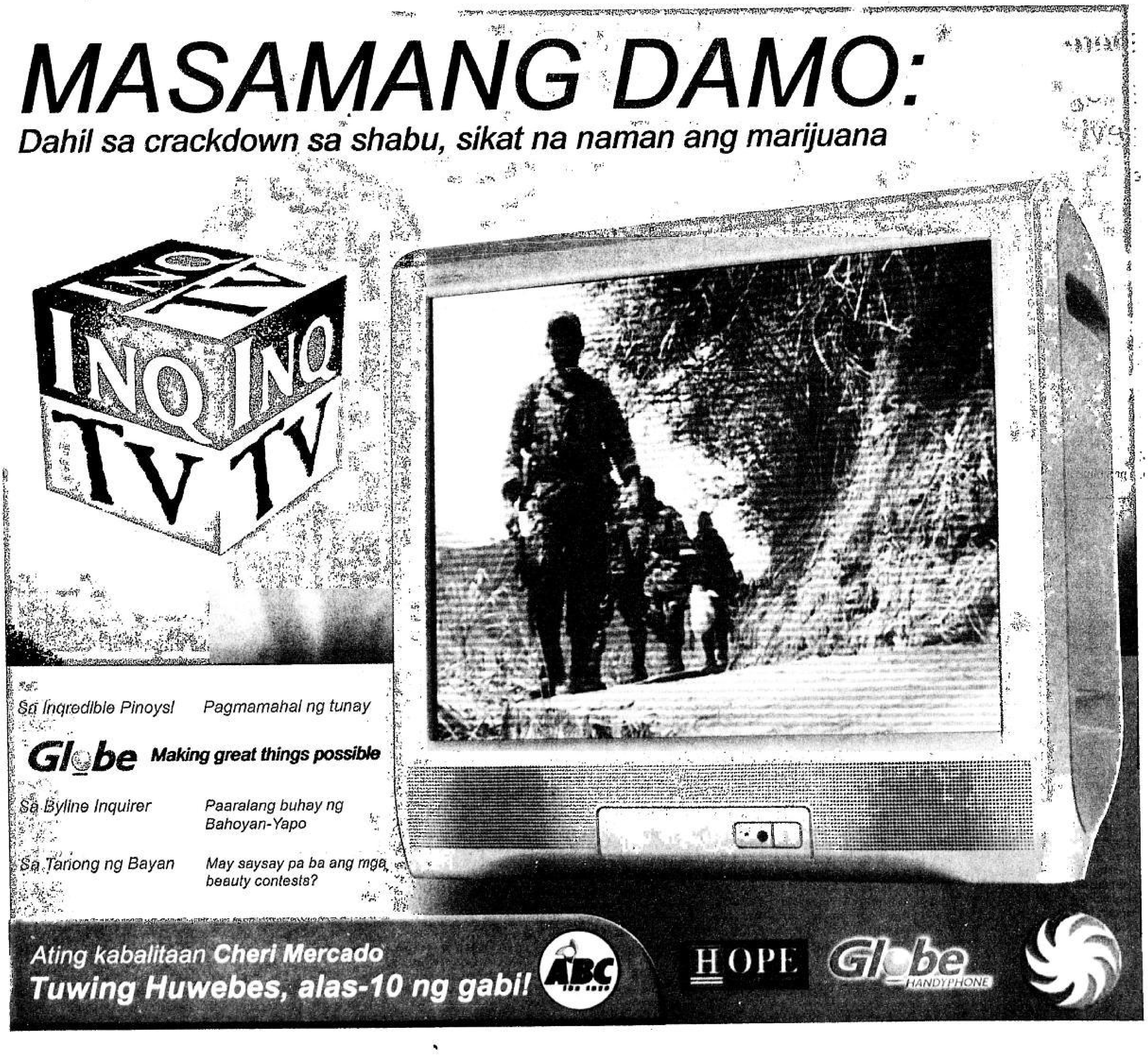
Cut and paste

Editing a tape can also be as simple as cutting it at one point and rejoining it to another section using an adhesive thin enough to avoid impeding the tape's motion. This process is called splicing.

Nowadays, it is even easier to alter audio recordings using a computer through programs like ProTools.

According to Josa Deinla, a broadcast communication senior at the University of the Philippines, even students can mix, delete and add sounds to a recording.

According to tapeexpert.com, one can determine if a recording is authentic by observing unexplained gaps that contain buzzing, humming or silence. Short, abrupt sounds like clicks may also indicate splicing. Changes in background sounds, volume, voices or topic should also raise red flags. *With reports from Maricar Tolosa and Cyril L. Bonabente, PDI Research*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Where are school buses?

By Abigail L. Ho

THE LAND Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) yesterday canceled 3,117 Metro Manila school bus service franchises after operators failed to comply with the requirements for the renewal of their franchises.

Of the canceled franchises, 43 were reported from the LTFRB Central Office in Quezon City. The remaining 3,074 were from LTFRB offices in the National Capital Region.

LTFRB Chair Ma. Elena Bautista said the list of school bus service operators with canceled franchises would be sent to Metro Manila schools and parent-teacher associations. The list would also be posted on bulletin boards in LTFRB offices all over the region.

LTFRB NCR Director Flory Cuesta said most of the operators whose franchises were canceled had not filed for renewals.

"Most of them did not renew their franchises because they could not meet our requirements, which were usually related to the type of vehicle that could be used for school service," Cuesta said.

Vehicles for school service should not be more than 15 years old to qualify for a franchise, she added.

As for vehicle type, Cuesta said the LTFRB accepts jeepneys, Mitsubishi L-300 and L-200 vans, minibuses that could seat up to 49 people, and buses that could seat more than 50 people.

Another reason for not renewing a franchise could be that school service operators were using their vehicles to venture into other businesses outside of shuttling students to and from their schools.

Cuesta said there had been reports that some school service owners also operated their vehicles like Mega Taxis in Metro Manila, charging passengers individually.

She explained that since school service franchise holders also used yellow plates for their vehicles, they could get away with using their school service vehicles as public utility vehicles.

Cuesta appealed to schools and parents not to use vehicles without LTFRB franchises since these buses do not enjoy insurance coverage.

Smooth sailing on school opening day

By Tina G. Santos
and Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

PREPARATIONS made weeks before the opening of the current school year appear to have paid off for Manila school officials.

Division of City Schools superintendent Ma. Luisa Quiñones said, except for some minor problems, "Everything went smoothly."

Quiñones said they coordinated with other government agencies and police officials for a trouble-free opening.

Last year, the city's public schools had to cope with transfer students due to the rise in fees in many private schools.

This year, despite many transferees, Quiñones said the situation was "manageable."

She said about 90 percent of the city's estimated student population of 287,000 reported for class yesterday.

At present, Manila public school teachers handle at least 50 pupils each.

Meanwhile, Mayor Lito Atienza ordered tighter security measures, particularly around the University Belt area where barangay officials seized about two kilos of marijuana leaves over the weekend.

Patrol teams

Patrolling barangay *tanod* confiscated the prohibited substance from a suspected drug distributor in front of the University of the East on C.M. Recto Avenue early Friday.

Chair Eman de Vela of Barangay 404, Zone 41, District 4, said the suspect managed to escape.

Authorities believe the contraband was to be distributed in the University Belt, where marijuana continues to sell well especially with high school students.

The Western Police District (WPD) said it would enforce an ID system and no-parking scheme around Manila schools to keep strangers away.

The WPD met recently with school and barangay officials as part of its "Balik Paaralan" program. WPD Director Pedro Bulaong said that apart from trying to deter crimes like snatching, hold-up and kidnapping of students, the police would also focus on drug pushers.

In Pasig City, attendance on the first day of classes fell short of expectations. Rizal High School, the biggest in the city, registered only 8,500 students as of yesterday afternoon. It had more than 9,000 students last school year.

Pasig's biggest elementary school, De Castro Elementary School, had 3,967 students as of yesterday. Last year, it had 5,276.

But Pasig City and San Juan Division administrative officer Benjamin Jacosalem said many parents usually enrolled their children only after classes had started.

In the biggest elementary school in San Juan, only 900 students showed up yesterday. Jacosalem said Pinaglabanan Elementary School had 2,000 students last year. The figures were expected to rise during the week.

Enough books

Rizal High School principal Josephine Cruz said the local government had provided almost enough books. The school also got new wooden chairs yesterday. High school freshmen got free bags and notebooks.

In Navotas, Mayor Toby Tiangco involved the city police, Public Order and Safety Office, engineering department, Public Information Office, health department and school division in back-to-school operations. Police chief Supt. Genesis Tolejano was also directed to increase police visibility.

Fogging operations will also be launched in schools, apart from the cleaning of canals and waterways in the municipality.

Detective program revived

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THE CITY'S "finest" detectives are back.

Officials of the Western Police District have taken steps to revive their detective program in an effort to uplift the image of the police and improve the quality of crime investigation in the city.

Chief Insp. Alejandro Yanquiling Jr., who is in charge of the Manila Police Academy's curriculum development and planning office, said the WPD administration had paved the way for the establishment of a detective school within the academy.

Yanquiling said they are currently selecting and screening more than 200 investigators for the training program that starts this month.

Shuttle buses for students mulled

By Tarra V. Quismundo

THE METROPOLITAN Manila Development Authority (MMDA) will take another look at a shelved project designed to ease traffic caused by vehicles dropping off and fetching students in private schools.

Angelito Vergel de Dios, MMDA Traffic Operations Center executive director, said yesterday the idea of a single loading and unloading zone for buses to be used by students should be revived to ease traffic around private schools on class days.

Vergel de Dios told the INQUIRER that he would bring up the matter with MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando.

The traffic chief said the idea was first considered in 2002, when it was observed that private vehicles clogged main roads like Ortigas Avenue, fronting De La Salle University-Greenhills in Mandaluyong, and Katipunan Avenue, in front of the Ateneo de Manila campus in Quezon City.

The project was deferred after a bomb attack on a bus that same year on Edsa killed two men.

Grenade blast claims 2 more victims

THE DEATH toll from a grenade blast that ripped through a house in Sampaloc, Manila, on Sunday rose to four, with seven wounded, police said.

Three children were among those killed after an unidentified man hurled a grenade into the home of Andy Gutierrez and his family.

SPO3 Danilo Vidad of the Western Police District Homicide Section identified the fatalities as Carl Mark Gutierrez, 3; Maymay Guayan, 3; Ronie Guayan, 7 months, and a certain Josienith, 18.

Maymay and Josienith were killed instantly while Carl and Ronie were declared dead on arrival after they were brought to the Jose Reyes Memorial Medical Center and the Ramon Magsaysay Medical Center.

Carlos, Gloria Nora, Princess Ann, Aaron and Rannie Gutierrez, and Zoraida Guayan sustained shrapnel wounds.

Witnesses said they heard an explosion around 7:30 p.m. and later saw a man walk away from the Gutierrez house near the LRT 2 Legarda Station.

The still unidentified suspect fled the scene and boarded an FX taxi bound for Nagtahan, they added.

The motive for the attack has yet to be determined. *AFP and Miko Morelos, trainee*

Women cause-oriented groups a letdown

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

GABRIELA and other women cause-oriented groups are a letdown.

I just found out they're not sincere in helping women in distress as they have been projecting themselves to the public.

Over the weekend, Katsiaryna "Katti" Aleinik Colet, 23, was detained at a Camp Crame jail on a charge of frustrated parricide.

Katti is a battered wife. She struck her husband in the face with an empty Coke or beer bottle during a quarrel at their home. She said she did that to stop him from further beating her up.

Her husband, Baldomero "Bobby" Colet, 52, scion of a prominent clan in Pangasinan, is an alleged drug user.

Using his family name and claiming to be a media man (he also claims to hold the rank of captain in the Air Force), Colet filed the frustrated parricide case against Katti.

He used as evidence a photo showing his bloody face, but disregarded the fact that Katti's hand was also wounded by glass shards.

She ran away from home after wounding Bobby, fearing reprisal from him.

The prosecutor who handled the preliminary investigation of Bobby's complaint didn't know Katti ran away from home and sought refuge at a center for battered women.

The summonses from the prosecutor were sent to their conjugal home, but she didn't receive them because she was already somewhere else. Her failure to attend the preliminary investigation became the basis for the filing of the case in court. The bail for her temporary liberty was set at P200,000. She had to pay a P45,000 insurance premium.

Katti doesn't have any relative in the country. She comes from a country called Belarus, one of the former republics of the defunct Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. She can't run to her embassy either, as there's none here—we don't have diplomatic relations with her country yet. Now, where would Katti get the P45,000?

I thought that when I wrote about Katti's plight in this space last Saturday, cause-oriented women's groups like Gabriela would come to visit her at the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG).

She had been detained at the CIDG from Thursday to Sunday while some concerned people scrounged around for the P45,000.

I thought Gabriela and other women's groups would show Katti their moral support by visiting her, at least.

I thought wrongly. *Magaling lang pala ang* Gabriela *sa* press release.

* * *

The Department of Foreign Affairs should give moral support to our ambassador to Israel, Antonio Modena.

The Israeli government had demanded an apology from Modena on his remarks that its immigration police's high-handed treatment of Filipino workers was reminiscent of the oppression of the Jews by Hitler's Gestapo.

Modena said, "Just like the Nazis treated the Jews, you know, that's how the immigration police treat us."

Apologize or get out of Israel, was Tel Aviv's strong message to Modena.

Although Modena was being undiplomatic when he made those remarks, there's nothing our government can do now but support him.

After all, he was protecting the interests of his countrymen in Israel.

I know Modena very well. He was my fellow reporter at the defunct Times Journal during the martial law years. Back then, Tony Modena, with his thick Romblon accent, was already very outspoken about everything.

THE LUSH vegetation and refreshing scenery at the La Mesa Nature Reserve in Quezon City is just a short trip away for nature lovers and trekkers in the Metro looking for fun and adventure. JOAN BONDOC

Nature gets closer to Metro Manila

By DJ Yap

SWEATY and panting after a two-hour trek through forest and grassland, one newspaperman said: "Is this really Metro Manila?"

Indeed, the newly opened La Mesa Nature Reserve Ecological Trails and Campsite seems a world away from the hustle-and-bustle of the metropolis.

Lined with trees and thick vegetation, the Eco-Trail runs through the La Mesa Watershed Nature Reserve in Quezon City and part of Caloocan City, ending at the campsite that overlooks a man-made lake.

Last Thursday, about 30 organizers, journalists, nature lovers and city dwellers hiked some 2.5 kilometers for the launch of the Eco-Trail and Campsite.

They negotiated stairways made of packed soil and bamboo, and several wood bridges. Except for some fallen logs on the way, the path was easy to follow, made pleasurable by the sounds and sights of nature.

Guides

Foresters served as guides, describing the trees and pointing to termite mounds and hanging bats. As they took photographs, the hikers listened to stories like how a pair of gmelina trees got struck by lighting one night. Every few hundred meters or so, armed guards roamed.

The forest covers some 2,000 hectares and boasts of 72 local tree species, such as *narra*, *molave*, mahogany, *lauan*, *kamagong* and *supa*. Some trees had cards describing the species and their role in the ecosystem.

Several meters away from the campsite, hikers got a splendid view of a man-made lake, which covers 700 hectares.

City dwellers need to pay only P200 to hike through the forest. Campers, on the other hand, pay P500 for an overnight stay at the campsite. They pay an additional P50 for each succeeding day.

At the launch, Quezon City Mayor Feliciano Belmonte Jr. said the Eco-Trail was not only a good way to attract tourists, it also provided city dwellers an opportunity to see nature up close.

More trees

Gina Lopez, managing director of ABS-CBN Foundation Inc., said Metro Manila residents were the beneficiaries of the nature reserve. "The more trees we have here, the cleaner Metro Manila air will be," Lopez said, adding that she hoped the Eco-Trail would earn an annual income of P4 million.

The Eco-Park was projected to earn P6 million every year.

Administrator Orlando Hondrade, of the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS), which owns the area, said profits from the project should be used to maintain the forest.

The La Mesa is a watershed adjacent to the Sierra Madre mountain ranges. It is the site for the filtration plant and reservoir that supplies water to Metro Manila residents.

ABS-CBN Foundation's Bantay Kalikasan is working to save La Mesa in cooperation with the Quezon City government and the MWSS.

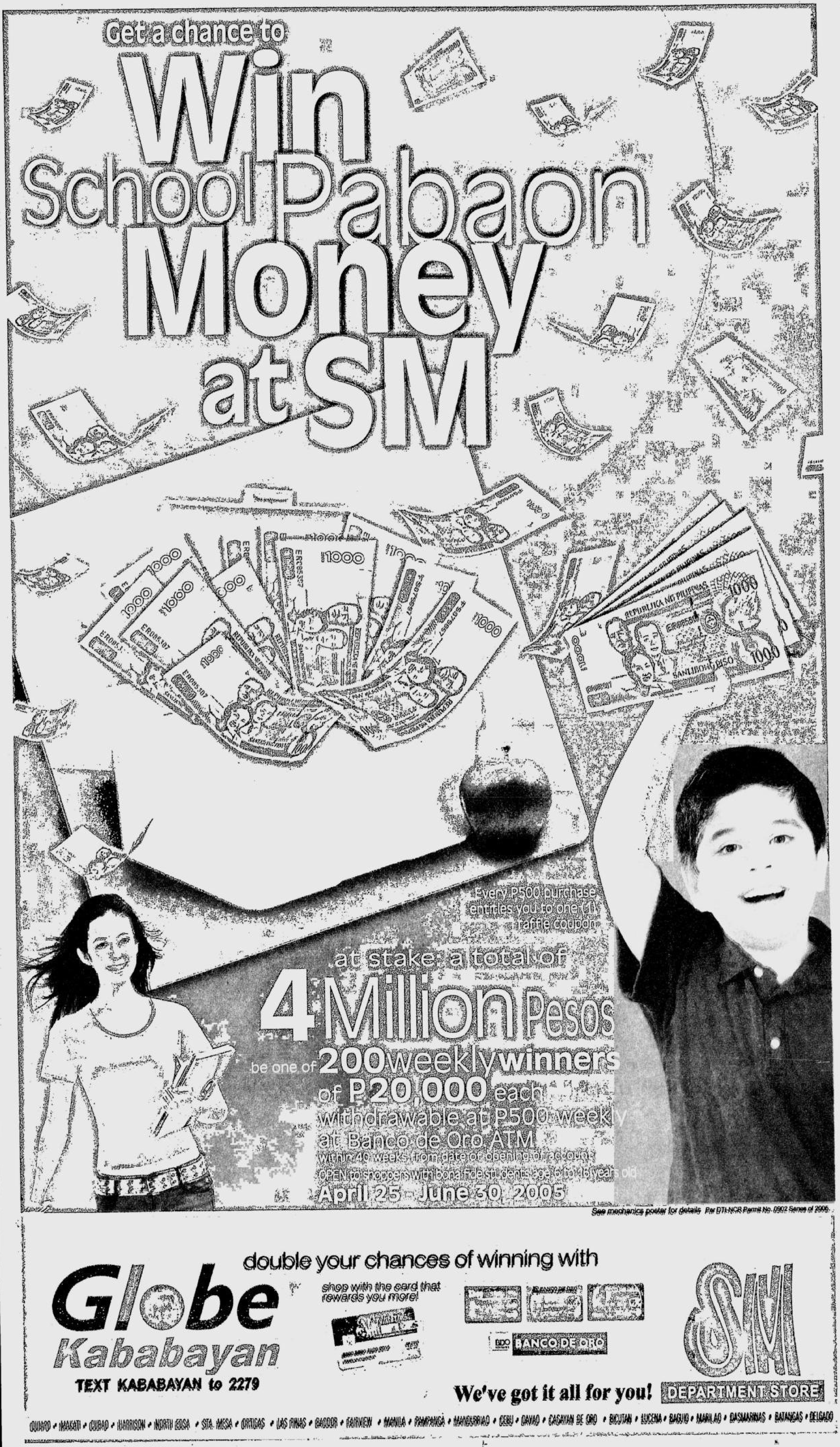
METROBRIEFS

Ship lines office rob

EIGHT men, including a man in a policeman's uniform, robbed a shipping lines office of P200,000 in cash in Navotas at dawn yesterday. According to Northern Police District Director Chief Supt. Raul Gonzales, the suspects used high-powered guns. The armed men, pretending to be law enforcers, were able to enter the compound of Solid Shipping Lines at 42 H. Lopez St., BBS, Navotas. One suspect in a policeman's uniform told the guard on duty at the main gate that they were responding to a shooting incident in the area. Upon entering the compound, the armed men immediately disarmed the guards and tied them up along with the other employees of the company before they ransacked the office. *Nancy C. Carvajal*

Shrine blessing

HIS EMINENCE, Jaime Cardinal Sin, will preside over the ceremonial blessing of the Shrine of the Coronation of Mary at the Antipolo Cathedral at 10 a.m. today. Antipolo Bishop Gabriel Reyes will assist the Cardinal during the ceremony. The Coronation Shrine is the last in the chain of 20 Rosary Shrines of Peace marking "The Way of Mary" (TWOM), which are being put up along the stretch of Ortigas Avenue, starting at Edsa Shrine and winding up at the Antipolo Cathedral in Antipolo City. The blessing ceremony follows the completion of the two bookend shrines for TWOM. Each shrine features a mystery of the Holy Rosary rendered in bas-relief by Angono-based artist Nemi Miranda. The bas relief sculptures are mounted on 6-foot-high pedestals designed by Joey Amistoso, an architect whose notable works include the newly built majesty altar Retablo of the Antipolo Cathedral. The remaining 18 shrines are to be completed within the year.



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SPORTS

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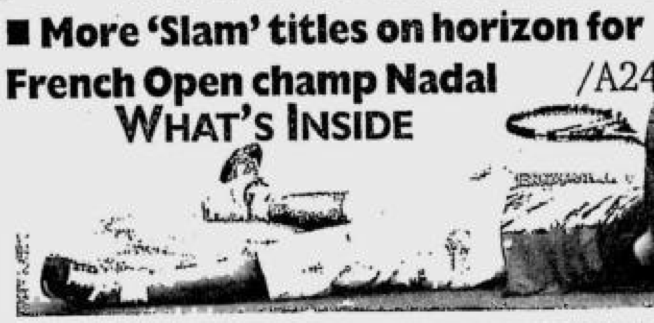

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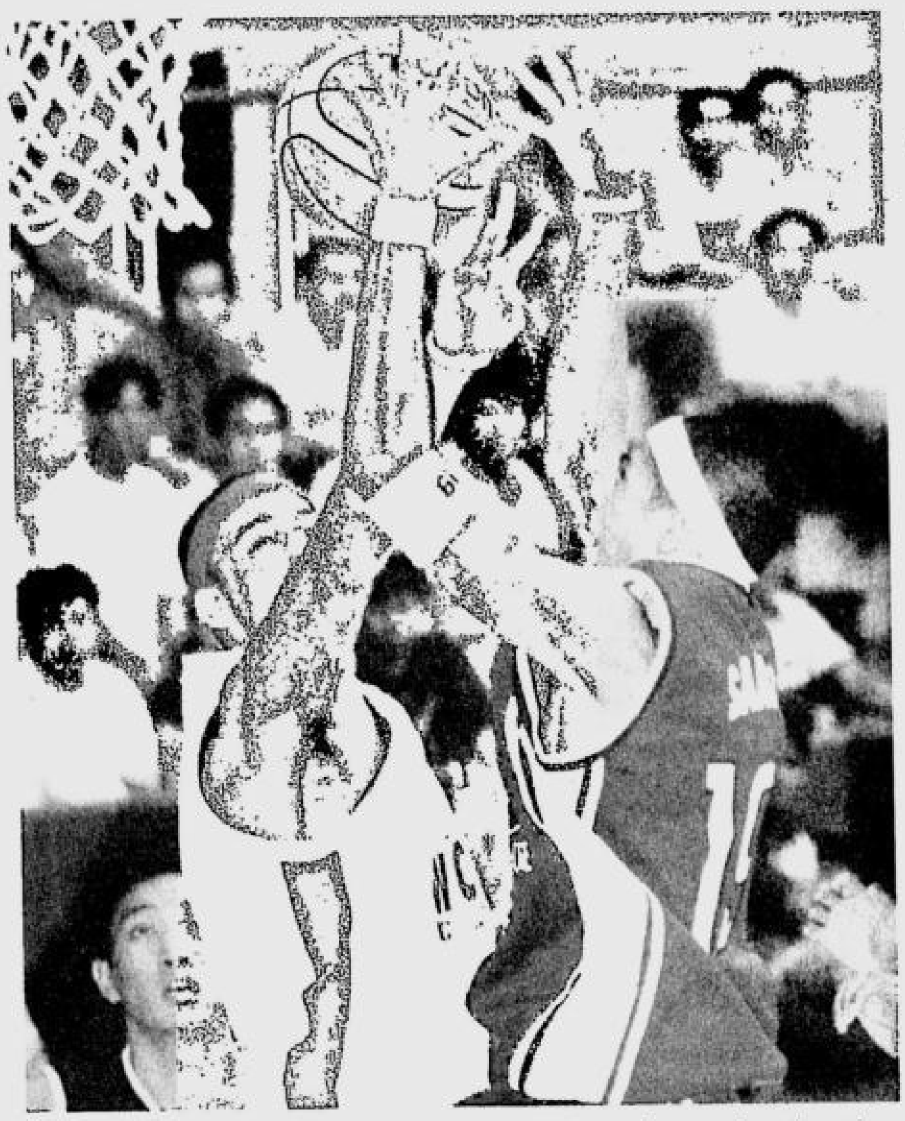
Magnolia, Welcoat dispute title berth



PLAYERS TO WATCH: Anthony Washington of Welcoat disputes the rebound with Arwind Santos during their elimination round game. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

MAGNOLIA Ice Cream, virtually untouchable with the arrival of Fil-Am Kelly Williams, and Welcoat Paints dispute the second finals berth of the PBL Unity Cup today at the Pasig Sports Center.

GAME TODAY (*Pasig Sports Center*)
3:30 p.m.—Welcoat vs Magnolia

While both coaches say desire will be the key, Williams is a definite plus for the Wizards in the 3:30 p.m. showdown to decide who gets into the championship playoffs with Montaña Pawnshop.

"It's the desire of the players more than the technical aspect," noted Magnolia mentor Koy Banal.

"In this series, I don't believe in momentum," Welcoat coach Caloy Garcia said. "It's about the attitude, who wants to win the game more."

Magnolia is actually shooting for its eighth win in nine games since tapping Williams, who will be ranged against Welcoat's own Fil-Am ace, Anthony Washington.

And the Wizards have already beaten the Paintmasters two times in their last three encounters under the new semifinal format that gave Welcoat an automatic one-win edge in the best-of-five series as the No. 2 team in the eliminations.

After Montaña wrapped up its semifinal series against Granny Goose last Saturday, the Wizards forged a do-or-die game with an 80-72 win over the Paintmasters.

"It was a collective effort," said Banal of the victory. "The guys worked so hard even in practice. It wasn't a short practice nor a light practice. There was no tomorrow for us."

And Banal is hoping that the Wizards will thrive in yet another crucial situation.

"We just have to be ready, whatever happens," he said. "The team must be sharp and have the energy to win the game."

Garcia said Williams' strong impact in such a short time could have put too much pressure on Washington.

Ranked second in the eliminations with 15.9 points and 9.5 rebounds per game, Washington's performance dipped dramatically in the semifinals, even posting a measly point in Game 1.

Arwind Santos, Dennis Miranda and the much-improved Neil Rañeses have also consistently fueled Magnolia's offense.

Welcoat, meanwhile, has been turning to Jojo Tangkay, Marvin Ortiguerra and rookie Paolo Orbeta.

Magnolia evened the series when it claimed the semifinal opener, 75-62, behind Williams' 19 points and 15 rebounds.

But Washington got back on track with 16 markers and 11 rebounds, to lead Welcoat within a win away from advancing to the finals, 76-65.

Santos, Miranda and Rañeses, however, all came out strong for Magnolia, finishing with 15 points apiece to force the decider, 80-72.

Jasmine W. Payo

La Salle, San Sebastian keep V-League's top 2 positions

LA SALLE and San Sebastian made mincemeat of their respective rivals yesterday to keep their firm grip of the top two spots in the Shakey's V-League at the Rizal Coliseum.

The defending champion Lady Archers bucked a second-set loss to down arch-rival Ateneo, 25-15, 23-25, 25-15, 25-15, while the Lady Stags whipped Lyceum, 25-17, 25-19, 25-18.

With top scorer Michelle Carolino at the helm with 15 markers, the Lady Archers asserted their dominance of the unpredictable newcomers and clinched their seventh straight win in the conference.

The heavily favored Lady Stags, now at 7-1, showed no mercy in the match that lasted a little over an hour, leaning on the tandem of Cherry Rose Macatangay and Jennifer Bohawe, who pounded Lyceum with 17 and 14 points, respectively.

Ateneo dropped to 4-4 and slid to fourth place behind inaugural conference champion Santo Tomas.

After grabbing the tightly contested second set, Ateneo coach Luis Gepuela fielded an all-varsity lineup that proved to be no match for the powerhouse La Salle squad.

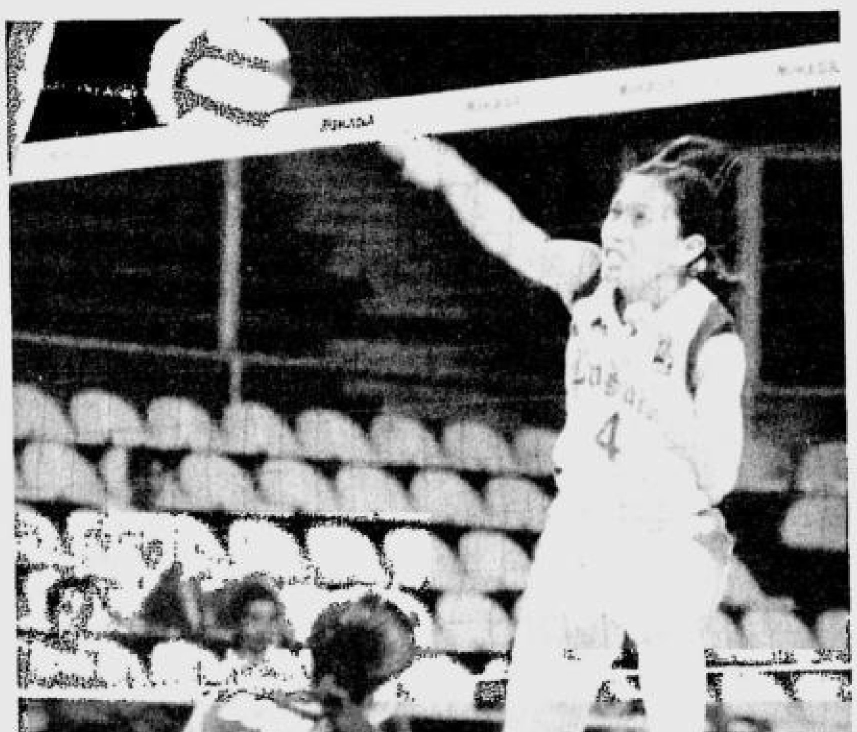
Lyceum remained the tailender, dropping to its eighth loss in as many games in this tournament backed by Accel, Mikasa, IBC 13 and Jemah Television.

Sorely missing the services of the injured Angelica Bigcas, Lyceum was able to stage mini rallies in the endgame but failed to match SSC's offense led by the dynamic Macatangay.

Lady Pirate Beverly Boto led her team with 11 points, while Joana Marie Fernando, who missed the team's previous game, only contributed seven markers.

"Our main objective was to enter the semifinals," said SSC çoach Roger Gorayeb. "Now we can plan to improve our game further and hopefully win."

Karla Tricia V. Magno



REIEA Ferina Saet of La Salle on the attack off Ateneo's Ma. Rosario Soriano during the game yesterday at the Rizal Coliseum. ERIK ARAZAS

Palace appoints Ramirez PSC chair; Garcia gets old post back

RAMIREZ

GARCIA

WILLIAM "Butch" Ramirez was finally elevated as chair of the Philippine Sports Commission even as Richie Garcia was reappointed commissioner of the government sports agency.

Originally designated as officer-in-charge, Ramirez was formally assigned to take over the post left by Eric Buhain in a letter signed by Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita on May 24.

The official appointment reached the PSC offices only yesterday.

A separate letter of appointment was forwarded to Garcia, who also served as commissioner when Carlos "Butch" Tuazon was installed PSC chair by President Joseph Estrada.

Ramirez, holder of a master's degree in administration majoring in government administration, joined the PSC as a commissioner when Philip Ella Juico was still the PSC chairn.

The new PSC head is reportedly in Bacolod and could not be reached for comment.

Musong R. Castillo

Bautista, Mexico's Bolanos size each other up in Mandaue today

By Salven L. Lagumbay, *Contributor*

WORLD Boxing Organization Asia Pacific bantamweight champion Rey "Boom Boom" Bautista and his Mexican opponent Gilberto Bolanos get to size each other up for the first time during a special press conference at 11 a.m. today at the office of Mandaue City Mayor Thadeo Ouano.

The dynamite-fisted Bautista battles the Ciudad Obregon, Mexico, native Bolanos in a 10-round war this Saturday at the Mandaue City Cultural and Sports Complex.

Renowned trainer Freddie Roach had earlier described the match as "explosive."

The first Mexican to fight in Cebu is due to arrive earlier today at the Mactan International Airport.

Bolanos will be accompanied by trainer Rogelio Baldenegro and Las Vegas representative Michael Koncz who is credited for arranging the

BAUTISTA/A22

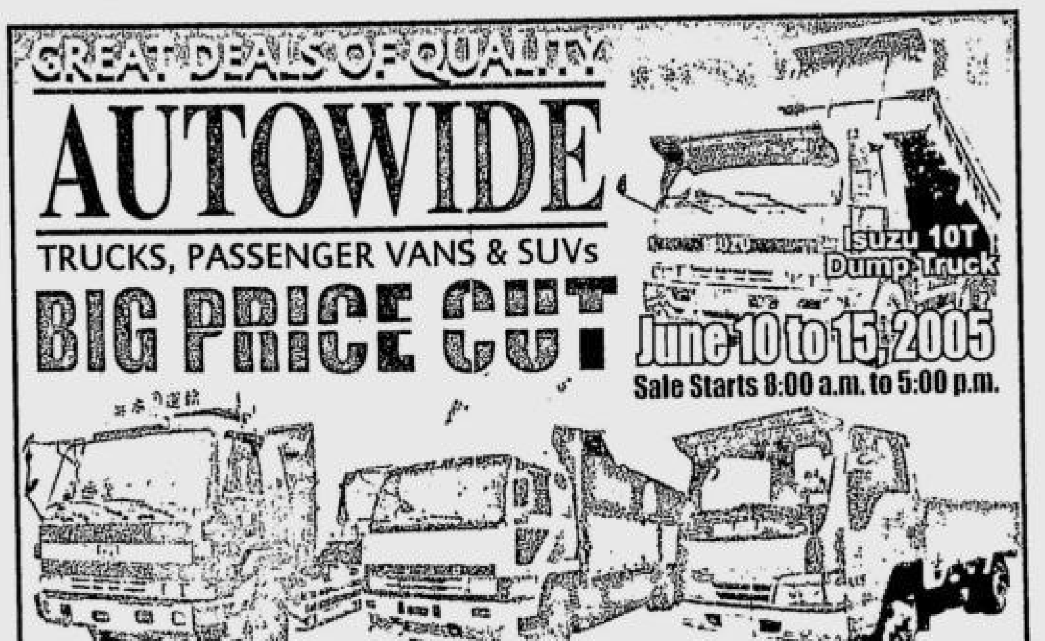
UE women, Tams bag Toribio crowns

UNIVERSITY of the East overcame a stubborn Adamson crew, 21-25, 25-15, 20-25, 25-20, 15-13, Saturday to nail the women's championship in the First FC Toribio Seniors Volleyball Cup at the Earist gym Saturday.

In the men's final, Far Eastern also struggled before subduing La Salle, 33-31, 25-20, 17-25, 25-19, to capture the men's crown of the event held in honor of UE's winningest volleyball coach in the UAAP, Francisco "Bitner" Toribio.

FEU bested College of Saint Benilde in straight sets, 25-19, 25-21, 28-26, to wind up third in women's play. St. Benilde's men's varsity squad made up for that by trouncing University of the Philippines, 25-23, 25-20, 26-24, in the battle for third.

The victorious UE and FEU spikers were unscathed in the tournament organized by Brenn Perez and Luz Santa Ana of UE and staged alternately at the Earist and UE-Manila gyms.



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Collegiate standouts may miss August Seaba tourney

By June Navarro

DUE TO a sudden change in the schedule, the top amateur players from the UAAP and NCAA will most likely miss the Southeast Asian Basketball Association (Seaba) championships.

Unless Philippine head coach Chot Reyes gets the go-signal from the two premiere collegiate leagues, Ateneo's LA Tenorio, 2004 NCAA Rookie-MVP Gabby Espinas of Philippine Christian, Far Eastern's Arwind Santos and probably Mac Cardona of La Salle won't be available to don the country's colors in the Aug. 2-8 meet.

The NCAA is set to open on June 25 and the UAAP on July 9, leaving Reyes no choice but to form the Seaba five from the 10 Philippine Basketball League dribblers earlier tapped for the training pool. The team is expected to be reinforced with three to four PBA players from the original 19-man pool.

"I don't know yet if we can get a concession from the UAAP and the NCAA to allow these players to play for the national team in the Seaba," said Reyes. "If they are not allowed to play, then we will just select the players from the pool."

The PBL national hopefuls are Froilan Baguion, Eric dela Cuesta, Jon Dan Salvador, Dennis Miranda, Cesar Catli, Jason Misolas, Jett Latonio, JR Quiñahan, Abby Santos, JR Reyes and Fil-Ams Anthony Washington and Kelly Williams.

"Since the approach is developmental, we will just reinforce the team for the Seaba with players from the PBA who are 24 years old and below," said Reyes, ticking off the names of Mike Cortez, James Yap, Sonny Thoss, Rico Villanueva and Kerby Raymundo as the candidates.

Originally slated July 20-26, the Seaba was moved a week later by the Singapore organizers.

The tournament is the regional qualifier for the Fiba-Asia Basketball Championships in Doha, Qatar, in September where the top two teams advance to the 2006 World Basketball Championships in Saitama, Japan.

"The Seaba is crucial because it's the qualifying for the tournament that we're looking forward to, so I'm going to handle it as well," said Reyes.

No less than Philippine Olympic Committee president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco entrusted the Seaba coaching job to Reyes, who was later given the additional job of handling the national women's and youth teams.

Aces battle Beermen for second semis slot

ACTION in the Gran Matador-Philippine Basketball Association Fiesta Cup gets into high gear as the wild-card phase fires off beginning this week.

The playoff schedule starts Thursday although the cast has yet to be completed pending the outcome of the Alaska-San Miguel encounter tomorrow.

The Aces and the Beermen clash in a 7 p.m. playoff game at the Araneta Coliseum for the second outright semifinal berth.

Both teams finished the qualification round tied for second place with identical 11-7 cards.

Talk 'N Text already secured the top spot and an automatic slot in the best-of-five semis for having the best record of 12-6 at the end of the qualification round.

The Pals clinched the No. 1 seeding by winning their last assignment against the Barangay Ginebra Kings, 101-100, behind Willie Miller's game-winning basket.

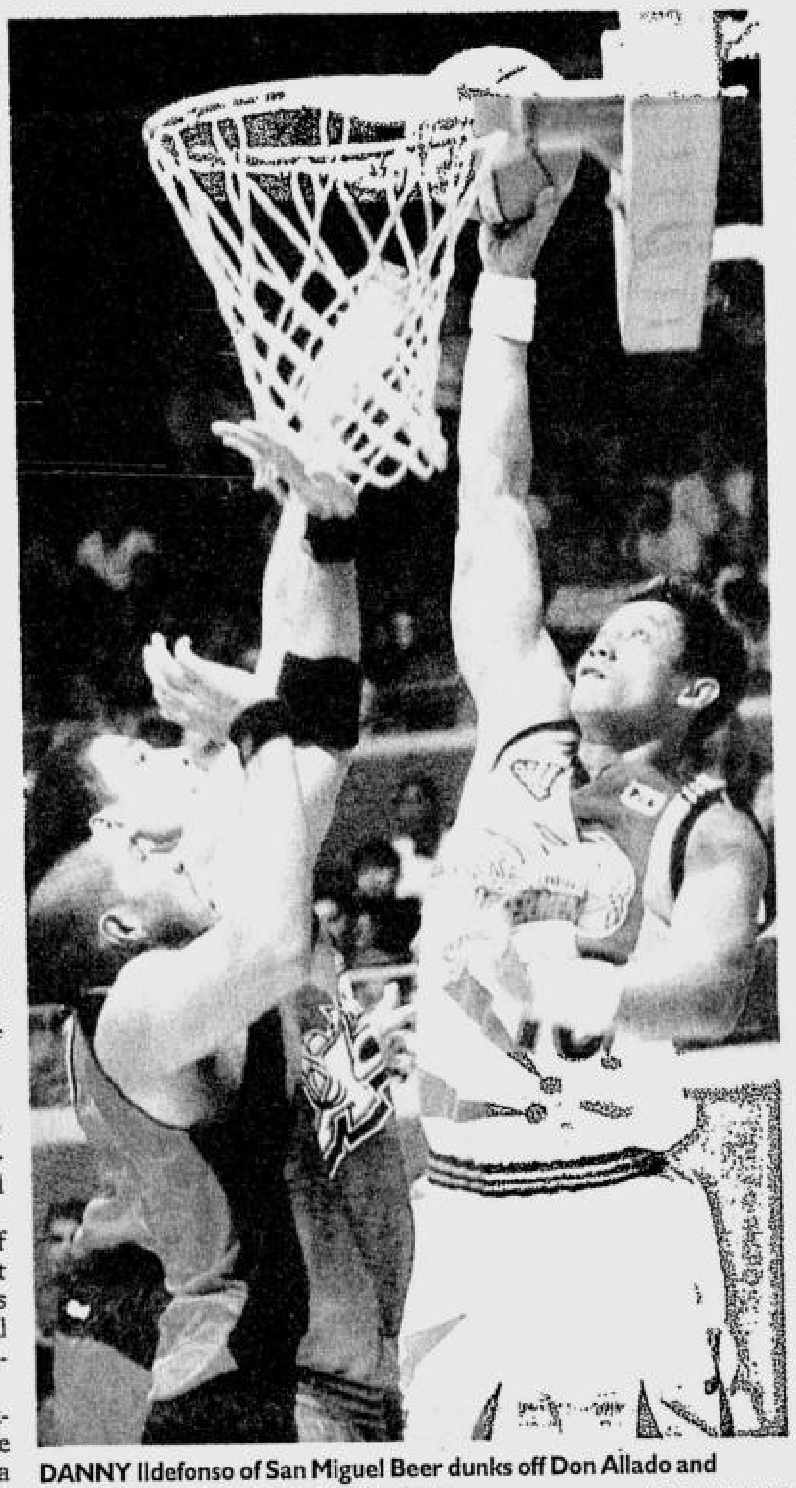
The wild-card pairings will have No. 5 FedEx (9-9) meeting No. 8 Purefoods (7-11) and sixth seed Red Bull (9-9) clashing with defending champion and seventh seed Barangay Ginebra (8-10) in a rematch of last year's Fiesta Cup Finals.

Both are best-of-three series.

Fourth seed Sta. Lucia (10-8) plays No. 9 Shell (7-11) and the loser between Alaska and San Miguel battles No. 10 Coca-Cola (6-12).

In the next round, the winner of the Sta. Lucia-Shell tiff gets to meet the survivor of the FedEx-Purefoods series. It will be the Ginebra-Red Bull winner against the victor of the Alaska-SMB versus Coca-Cola game.

All teams are coming off a weeklong break after the league gave way to the staging of the Fiba-Asia Champions Cup.



DANNY Ildefonso of San Miguel Beer dunks off Don Allado and Sonny Thoss of Alaska in this file photo. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

RP 'sepak' bets bow out of contention

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—The Philippine men's squad bowed out of contention in doubles regu of the International Invitational Sepak Takraw Championship 2nd Edward S. Hagedorn Cup at the Puerto Princesa Coliseum Sunday.

Powerhouse Myanmar dealt Philippines-B made up of Genemark Saavedra, Danilo Alipan and reserve Michael Jos a 21-18, 21-19 beating in the last doubles match to raise its unbeaten streak to four.

The hoop event will be played Monday where the Filipino men and women are expected to perform well. The RP men's team won the silver medal in the King's Cup in Thailand last December.

After bowing to South Korea Saturday night, the Philippines-A team of Raffy Dagaraga, Jose Ricky Gernale and reserve Roy Lanuza lost to Singapore, 21-14, 17-21, 16-15.

Myanmar will face Japan while Korea will slug it out with Malaysia in the crossover finals.

But the Filipinos' form still impressed the sport's regional officials.

"Filipino players are good but they have little experience," said Kyaw Zin Moe, secretary-general of the Myanmar Sepak Takraw Association. "Given [some] exposure, they will give us a run for our money."

The weeklong event is a pre-23rd Southeast Asian Games tournament organized by Philippine Amateur Sepak Takraw Association (Pasta) and supported by the city government of Puerto Princesa headed by Mayor Hagedorn.

"We still have one chance—in hoop event," said Hagedorn, who handles the Puerto Princesa-based RP-A men's team. "I hope we can finally get our first men's medal in this event."

Bautista . . .

From page A21

Bautista-Bolanos confrontation which was originally scheduled in Orleans Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas.

Koncz is also responsible for putting up the Bobby Pacquiao-Carlos Navarro duel on June 17 in California for the WBC Continental Americas super featherweight title.

The iron-fisted 27-year-old Bolanos boasts of 10 wins, all by knockout, against eight losses and one draw.

The youthful Bautista, a native of Candijay, Bohol, is unbeaten in 15 fights, winning 11 of them inside the distance.

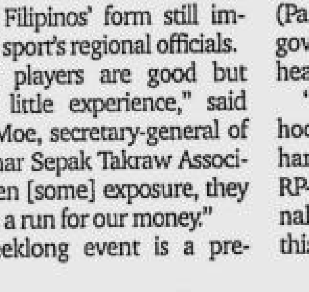
International promoter Sammy Gello-ani said the Bautista-Bolanos scrap is set at 9 p.m. to give the Bohol fans of Bautista time for an early trip back home.

New balls showcased at NBA Madness

SPALDING Basketball rolled out its most advanced and trendiest basketball models during the recent NBA Madness at the Araneta Coliseum.

Spalding, the NBA's official basketball and released in the Philippines through its exclusive distributor, Proline Sports Center, was used during the three-point shoot-out, mad skills competition, slamdunk showdown and all the NBA Madness' interactive events.

The four-day NBA Madness which ended Sunday, featured Orlando center and No. 1 draft pick Dwight Howard, Los Angeles Lakers forward Luke Walton, and the Houston Rockets Power Dancers.



THE POPULAR Yao Ming ball

NBA fans saw the latest Spalding models, including the Infusion, Jersey, Team Logo, Player and Classic basketballs, at the Spalding-Proline booth at the Araneta Coliseum.

Spalding-Proline has a special treat for local hoopsters and enthusiasts. Limited discount coupons to participants and select patrons will be handed out at any branches of Proline Sports Center which has been the distributor of Spalding basketball in the country for 35 years.

SPORTSWATCH

Senador leads Palawan perfect scorers

INTERNATIONAL Master Emmanuel Senador beat Allan Macala in the third round yesterday to lead a big group of perfect scorers in the Baragatan Open Chess Festival at the provincial capitol in Puerto Princesa City, Palawan. The Mallorca Chess Olympiad veteran took the win after 52 moves of French Defense. Also scoring 3.0 points in as many games were IM Luis Chiong IV, national masters Rolando Nolte, Rolando Andado, Nouri Hamed and Edmundo Gatus, Randy Segarra and Anthony Lungcay. But the biggest head-turner in the four-day event so far was National Chess Federation of the Philippines (NCFP) vice president lawyer Romeo Seratubias. Seratubias, also the provincial administrator of Palawan, scalped Mar Tanio after just 23 moves of King's Indian Defense to pace the chase group with 2.5 points. Sharing second spot with Seratubias were IM Barlo Nadera, NM Mirabeau Maga and local bet Jun Virgo. The champion in the P140,000 tournament will get P50,000.

Greenhills Independence Day run set

THE SECOND All Greenhills Intervillage Run fires off at 6 a.m. this Sunday from the Northeast Greenhills Clubhouse on La Salle Street in Greenhills, San Juan. Dubbed as the All Greenhills Independence Run, the 5-K fun run is organized by the sports chairs of Northeast, East, West and North Greenhills subdivisions headed by lawyer Ric Bernabe in partnership with Sun Bolt Sports Drinks. Some 300 resident and guest runners are entered in the race which will have its check-in and race briefing at 5:30 a.m. Prizes at stake are medals for the top three male and female finishers in both the resident and guest divisions. Registration is still ongoing at the Vasquez Madrigal Building at 51 Annapolis Street in Greenhills. Registration fee is P100. Event T-shirts are given out during registration. Supporting organizers are the municipality of San Juan, Barangay Tanod of Greenhills and the traffic bureau of San Juan.

Siso siblings advance in adidas netfest

CAGAYAN DE ORO—Sally Mae Siso routed Messy Narvasa, 6-0, 6-0, in the girls' 12-under play and brother Bernardine Siso ousted Francis Derrick Alcantara, 6-1, 6-1, in the boys' 12-under as the Cebuano juniors advanced in the adidas Tennis Challenge 2005 at the Nazareth Tennis Club here. Sally Mae reached the next round along with teammate Kimberly Traeger, who edged Carol dela Cerna, 7-6, 3-6, 7-6; local bet Kathleen Uy who whipped Shenna Engalla, 6-0, 6-1, and Cindy Gerapusco who tripped Nina Ladera, 6-1, 6-4. Bernardine matched the feat of John Go, a 6-4, 6-1 winner over al-Khadi Jainul of Basilan in the tournament organized by CTW, co-sponsored by Globe Gentext, backed by Snickers and Milo, and sanctioned by the Philta. In the girls' 16-under bracket, Cebu's Jin Querubin ousted Honey Mae Gilles, 6-0, 6-2; Jecille Ortellano downed Arlene Marave, 6-1, 6-2; Kristel Buenacosa beat Sallydine Siso, 6-2, 6-3, and Macy Solon nipped Nikki de Dios, 6-0, 6-4.

NCA 7-cocker kicks off at Big Dome

COCKFIGHTING at its finest resumes today with the National Cockers Association (NCA) 7-Cock Derby at the Araneta Coliseum. The first of more than 50 fights in today's qualifying round starts at 5 p.m. The championship round is on Thursday, according to hosts and partners Rene Medina and Ric de Guzman, who regularly field their top-rated entry, Lucky Rin Firefly Binangonan I and II, at the Big Dome. Up next is the the second leg of 2005 World Slasher Cup 8-Cock Invitational Derby on June 14, 16 and 18 with Big Dome owner Jorge "Nene" Araneta, Gov. Ito Yñares and Jun Santiago as hosts. The NCA will also stage the Super Special 6-Cock Derby on June 23 which will feature the heavyweights of Philippine cockfighting, according to derby hosts idol Patrick Antonio, Georgie Antonio, Ynares and San Juan Coliseum Group. For inquiries, call 9113101 or 9112928.

Roligon's 'Hatawan' stakes P3 million

COCKERS and breeders looking for big prizes are expected to vie in the P3-million Hatawan Sa Tag-ulan 6-Cock Derby slated July 4, 6, 8, 11 and 13 at the Roligon Mega Cockpit. Event host and Roligon owner Rolly Ligon said they have pegged the entry fee at only P8,800. The fastest win champion will drive home a five-door Pajero automatic turbo diesel SUV. More than 60 participants have entered the derby, including Summer Heat derby champion Raul Ebeo of Palawan (James First entry) and A. Rodriguez, who won the Toyota Hi-Lux vehicle for topping the fastest win time of 19 seconds with his bet King Joaquin. The "Hatawan" derby is Roligon's biggest crowd drawer with an average of 400 entries over the last 10 years. For reservation of cockhouses, call 8332275, 8331638 or 8529812.

FIRST TOUCH BOOTFEST: Over 40 boys and girls' teams joined the inaugural Milo First Touch Football Festival at the Ascom football field inside Fort Bonifacio, Makati, recently. The one-day tournament provided an opportunity for the participants of the Milo football clinics to play actual games.

Testing ground

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

SEEMINGLY, some just can't come to terms with reality.

Not Chot Reyes. And you have to admire him for that.

After a fifth-place finish by our national team in the just-concluded Fiba-Asia Champions Cup, the squad's coach would have rued the performance endlessly and be justified doing that.

Not Chot Reyes.

"I'm very, very happy," said Chot Reyes.

He said he was happy with what he learned from the tournament.

"We've played five straight games against teams with two American imports. We placed the highest among all local teams and our losses against teams with American imports were heartbreakers. So we definitely had put a tremendous effort in this tournament," he said.

The last time we played in the Fiba-Asia Champions Cup, we finished 10th. Before that, we finished sixth and seventh, respectively.

"We have already topped those finishes," said Chot Reyes. "I cannot complain because we already beat the best finish so far by an all-Filipino team."

Chot Reyes' boys, all members of the RP Pool training for overseas battles in the next three, four years, won four of their seven games in the weeklong tournament.

Had Chot Reyes gotten two imports like the chief contenders in the tournament, we might have easily pocketed the crown. But doing that would have definitely defeated Chot's purpose: Test his boys' capability against bigger, tougher teams in our future campaigns.

There are tournaments we ought to win. Which means we join such tournaments with the mission to win them. If we lose even just one of them, why, it should be crying time.

The Fiba-Asia Champions Cup was not a must-win tournament for us. Our team entered the event as mere "students." They were there to learn, to study, preparatory to their campaigns in the coming months, years.

In the first place, Chot Reyes' team in the Fiba-Asia Champions Cup isn't the real team that will be dispatched for future battles overseas. The players in that contingent are members of the training pool from where Chot will select the final composition of the squad to be sent abroad. Thus, if you notice, players like Yancy de Ocampo and Enrico Villanueva would probably be plucked out and tossed to the Seaba-bound team composed mostly of players from the PBL backyard.

So, if there's anyone from you out there still yakking about our fifth-place in the Fiba-Asia Champions Cup, quit the crap, please?

As I said, we didn't join the tournament to win it. Had it happened, we would have been very thankful. Would have been a big, big bonus.

But while the tournament was in fulfillment of a commitment by the country to host a Fiba event, it also served as a testing ground for our pool of players now training under Chot Reyes.

As you know, each game played gave Chot Reyes the opportunity to assess his players. In fact, Chot rated them individually, as if his team were a classroom packed with students.

In short, the tournament became one of the examinations of Chot's players. In Chot's lesson plan now are the grades of the players who played in the Fiba-Asia event.

There will be flunkies, as well as graduates.

Some will be listed as "conditional" but, alas, no repeaters.

Those who did well, they'll be shoo-ins for promotion to the next level.

Those who failed to make the grade, better luck next time.

So, who's saying we were losers in the tournament?

They know not the difference between a quiz and a final grading period.

Tough S. Korea training up for archer Figueroa

ATHENS Olympian Jasmin Figueroa looks forward to a training stint under an eminent South Korean coach after the World Championships, slated June 16 to 28 in Madrid, Spain.

FIGUEROA

Figueroa, who recently saw action in a competition in South Korea will join her teammates on the national squad and coach Henry Manalang during training at Coach Kim's Archery School from July 15 to 31 in Goosun City.

"I learned valuable lessons from my South Korean stint," said Figueroa, whose participation in the 6th Korean International Archery Tournament in Ulsan recently was backed by call center company Customer Contact Center Inc (C-Cubed).

The 20-year-old Figueroa made quite an impression in Athens, where she upset former world champion Natalia Valeeva of Italy.

Figueroa teamed up with Purita Joy Marino, Rachelle Anne Cabral and Edwina de los Reyes in besting Bhutan, 215-202, before running smack into the Korean brick wall made up by Sydney Olympics gold medalist Yun Mi-jin and world champion Park Sung-hyun. The Filipinas lost, 199-248, and placed eighth among 14 teams.

Figueroa lost to Chinese Taipei's Chen, 141-151, in the round of 32.

RACING TIPS

AT SLLP BY MR. 999

Race 1—1. Color of the Wind/Heart of the Wind 2. Rindo Maker 3. Je t'aime 4. Better Beth

Race 2—1. Golden Account 2. Miss Mirage 3. Raging Tsunami 4. Yao Man/Galamay 5. Love Talk

Race 3—1. Ocean Deep 2. Full of Fury 3. Dow Jones 4. Hello Junior

Race 4—1. High Class 2. Beautiful Gem 3. Strong Jays 4. Red Strike 5. Sun Power

Race 5—1. War Alert 2. Ilocos Pridfe 3. Bella Fireze 4. Itz Me Dahlin

Race 6—1. Dazzling Affair 2. Calvin's Magic/Miltied Forever 3. Snow Princess/Tool Pusher 4. Patago

Race 7—1. Real Spicy 2. Sir Brendan Jean/Sharon's Cookie 3. Cryptorose 4. Coromell

Race 8—1. Princess Sarah 2. Feng Shui 3. Sovereign Dancer 4. Rho Sig 5. Millennium Man 6. Bashful Lady

GRANDMASTERS' OPTION?

Chess row still unresolved

By Musong R. Castillo

TORRE: Seeded?

ANTONIO: Late-comer

MARIANO: Late-comer

VILLAMAYOR: Seeded?

TEMPERS flared, accusations flew and more questions arose during a forum held by the National Chess Federation of the Philippines yesterday to resolve the differences that forced the postponement of the elimination tournament for national team members in Tagaytay City.

The meeting, called by NCFP president Go Teng Kok and attended by the country's brightest wood pushers, ended without any deal being reached.

Players walked out of the Tagaytay tournament over two issues—the supposed seeding of GM Eugene Torre to the national squad and the late arrival and inclusion of fellow GMs Rogelio "Joey" Antonio and Nelson Mariano in the event.

The aspirants questioned the motives of NCFP secretary-general Samuel Estimo and the tournament's chief arbiter, Gene Poliarco, during the open forum, which ended in a shouting match.

The tournament in Tagaytay was meant to determine the five members of the national team. But complaints over an "NCFP option"—or a captain's pick after the eliminations—sparked the controversy.

Players saw the option as "totally unfair," since only the top four finishers would be given automatic slots, leaving No. 5 out as earlier announced.

Torre, Asia's first GM, walked out after feeling he was being singled out by some of the players as the NCFP "option."

An NCFP source, however, said that option was not Torre. Another source said the slot was meant for GM Bong Villamayor, who now earns a living as a chess instructor in Singapore.

Go gave Torre three days to decide whether or not to play before announcing the restart of the tournament.

If Torre decides to play, Go said he would convince the NCFP board to drop the "option" idea and stake the five slots.

In a gesture of sportsmanship, however, and without knowing that the "option" slot was for him, Villamayor tried to convince his fellow players to seed Torre and fight for the next four slots "fair and square."

Antonio and Mariano arrived in Tagaytay late and missed their first two matches. The other participants said the two GMs should have forfeited the games.

But Go and Estimo clarified that Antonio and Mariano, who both came from a tournament in New York, sent word they might not make it on time for the qualifiers because of flight booking difficulties.

The NCFP, through Poliarco, reset Antonio and Mariano's matches to later dates but within the schedule of the tournament as permitted by international rules in tournaments using the round-robin format.

"We can't have an elimination without Antonio and Mariano," Go told the forum. "I don't see a problem with this arrangement. If you (players) feel that you can beat them, beat them in the tournament, not through forfeiture."

The Philippines is the defending SEAG champion in chess, which will stake a total of eight gold medals this year.

Boy Pobre, the president of the National Chess Masters Association of the Philippines who said he was speaking for a group of players, later got into a shouting match with Estimo before walking out.

Pobre felt slighted after he was cut off by Go and Estimo during a tirade earlier.

Another Coseteng sweep in Touring Car tilt

ROSARIO, Batangas—Defending champion Jody Coseteng of San Miguel Beer proved he's simply the top of his class as he swept both races yesterday in the second leg of the 2005 Petron National Touring Car Championship at the Batangas Racing Circuit here.

Coseteng, who picked up 30 points to jack up his total to 57, quickly pulled away from the pack at the start and was beyond reach halfway through the 12-lap race.

"Almost everybody had a hard time adjusting to the renovated track," said Coseteng who clocked a fastest lap time of 1 minute 55.795 seconds. "Good thing the car setup fitted well with the track and the race went according to plan."

With Coseteng unchallenged, the focus shifted to the tight race between Caltex Havoline's Oscar Aguilar and Dominic Bon in this series sanctioned by the Automobile Association of the Philippines and sponsored by Petron Ultron, Toyota Motors Phils., Norkis Yamaha, Kilton Motors, Denso, MOF Company and Pilipinas Shell.

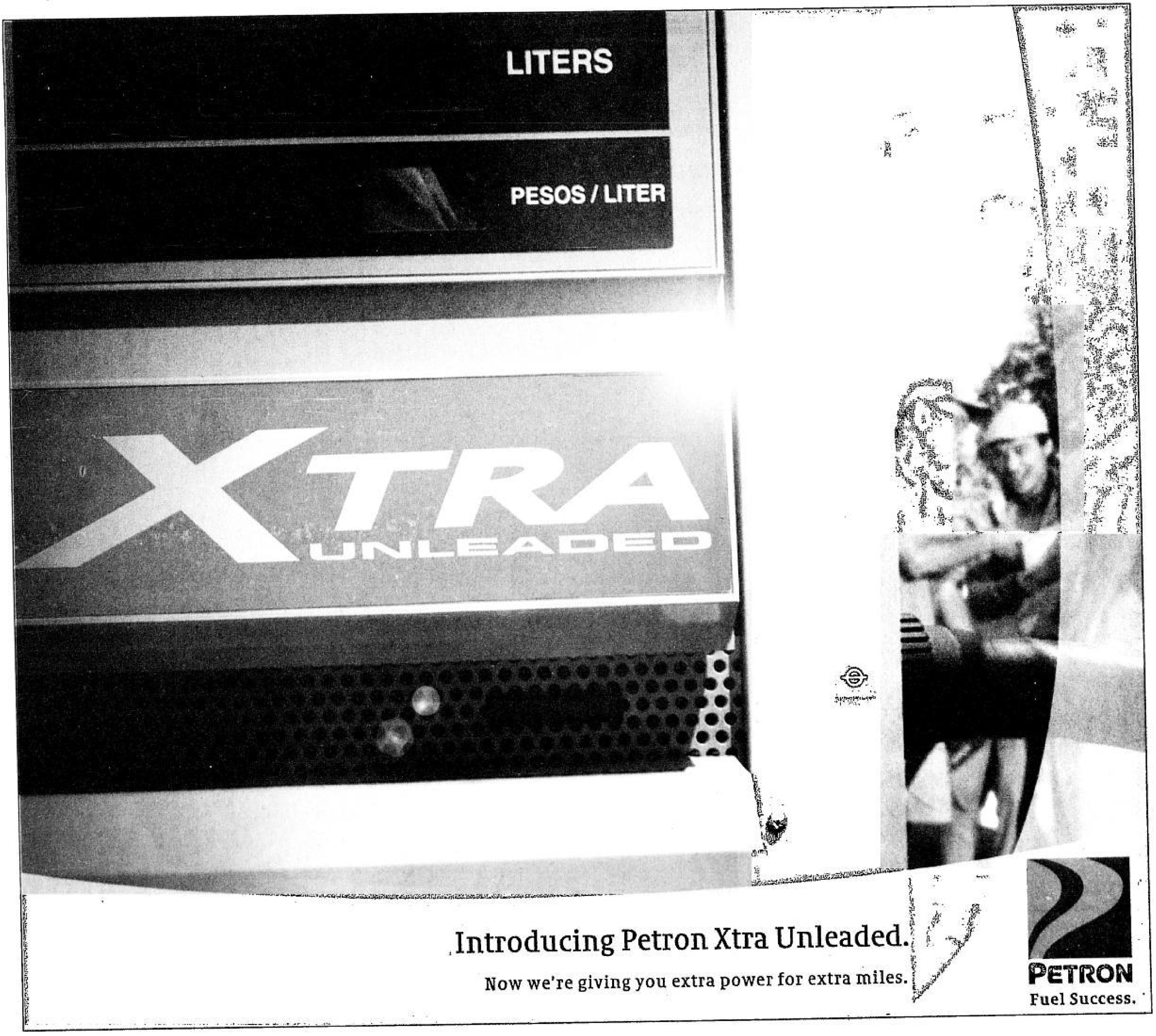
Bon, who topped the Class B race over Aguilar in the morning race, held on to second place early in the afternoon run. But Aguilar eventually snatched second place and his first ever victory in the division.

Francis Godinez and Buddy Rutledge wound up fourth and fifth, respectively, in both races.

Renan Morales and Jose Mari Camus likewise posted a sweep in their respective races in the series also supported by Yokohama and Celltron Marketing Co.

Morales dominated the National Junior Touring Car Championship over Peewee Mendiola and Izmael Icasas.

Camus ruled Race 1 of the Miata Cup over Daniel Ho and Lito Ignacio and duplicated his feat in Race 2 over Ho and Romeo Mercado.



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Heat's Wade doubtful in Game 7 today

MIAMI—Dwyane Wade's availability for Game 7 of the Eastern Conference finals on Monday remained unknown, but whether Miami's leading scorer can play could help decide whether Detroit's Larry Brown will be coaching for the final time.

The winner of Monday's game advances to the NBA Finals against the San Antonio Spurs, while the loser will have the whole summer to wonder what went wrong, and why.

In Brown's case, he'll head to the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota shortly after the Pistons' season ends—as soon as Tuesday, or as late as June 24—to address a medical problem that developed after complications from hip surgery. If surgeons are not able to correct it, Brown plans to retire from coaching.

So there's a lot riding on Game 7 for both teams, but more so for the 64-year-old coaching nomad than anyone else.

There was no official update on Sunday on whether Wade will be available for the biggest game in franchise history. The team said the situation with Wade's strained ribcage muscle was "status quo."

WADE: Feeling better, but ... AP

Wade's agent, Henry Thomas, said the decision to sit out Game 6 was made after Wade consulted with the Heat's medical staff. Thomas said Wade was "feeling better," but it was "too soon to tell" if he would play Monday.

Detroit played its best game of the series in defeating the Heat, 91-66, on Saturday to even the series at three games apiece.

Wade's teammates couldn't come close to winning without him in Game 6, finishing with the lowest postseason point total in franchise history.

"We worked hard all year long, won 59 games, for one reason, and that's to have home court in a Game 7 situation," Heat guard Damon Jones.

But unless the Heat gets Wade back, or finds an easier way to get the ball to Shaquille O'Neal, it's unlikely Miami will prosper after Game 7.

Detroit was able to use ball pressure in the backcourt and different defensive looks in the frontcourt to stifle Miami's ability to get the ball to O'Neal in the low post. O'Neal shot 11-for-18 and scored a team-high 24 points, but Detroit's defense kept him from being a much bigger offensive focal point.

Some of the darkest days in franchise history have happened on the Heat's home court in winner-take-all games, including losses to the New York Knicks in 1998, 1999 and 2000. *AP*

More 'Slam' titles on for French Open cha

PARIS—As a teen prodigy, Rafael Nadal's achievements match or surpass those of Pete Sampras, Andre Agassi and Mats Wilander, suggesting that his first Grand Slam title is unlikely to be his last.

A FIRST grand slam victory overwhelms Spain's Rafael Nadal (main picture) who seems to be thanking the heavens after defeating Argentinian Mariano Puerta in the dramatic final at Roland Garros. The teenage Spanish ace holds his trophy aloft (above). AFP

Then again, the Spaniard is the youngest French Open men's champion since Michael Chang, who never won another major title.

But few expect 19-year-old Nadal to become a one-Slam wonder. He's too big and strong, too cool and creative, too pugnacious and precocious.

He's already the king of clay, thanks to a victory on Sunday over Mariano Puerta in the Roland Garros final, 6-7 (6), 6-3, 6-1, 7-5. Now he'll set his sights on other surfaces, beginning with grass this week at Halle, Germany.

"I know (grass) is not my best surface," Nadal said. "It's a little bit fast. I need to improve some things in my game (to) play better in grass and in the fast courts."

Nadal reached the third round at Wimbledon two years ago when he was just 17, then missed last year's tournament with an injury. With only an average serve, he won't be among the favorites when the tournament begins in two weeks, but his current 24-match winning streak suggests he's not to be discounted.

"We are talking about someone who is going to write a page in the history of tennis," Puerta said. "I think he's going to do some beautiful things. He's going to become a legend."

Nadal is already drawing comparisons to Grand Slam greats:

—He's the youngest man to win a major title since Chang became the French champion in 1989 at age 17. Nadal is almost a month younger than Sampras was when he won the first of his record 14 major titles at the 1990 US Open.

—He's the first man to win the French Open on his initial try since Wilander, who claimed the first of his seven Grand Slam titles at Roland Garros in 1982.

—His winning streak is the longest by a male teenager in the Open era, surpassing Agassi by one victory. Agassi has since gone on to claim eight major titles.

However many Nadal wins, his first will be well remembered. One testament to the quality of his performance: He had 54 winners and 28 unforced errors, a remarkable ratio. And for sheer entertainment, the final surprisingly surpassed his semifinal victory on his birthday against top-ranked and world No. 1 Roger Federer.

He and Puerta kept each other scrambling as th
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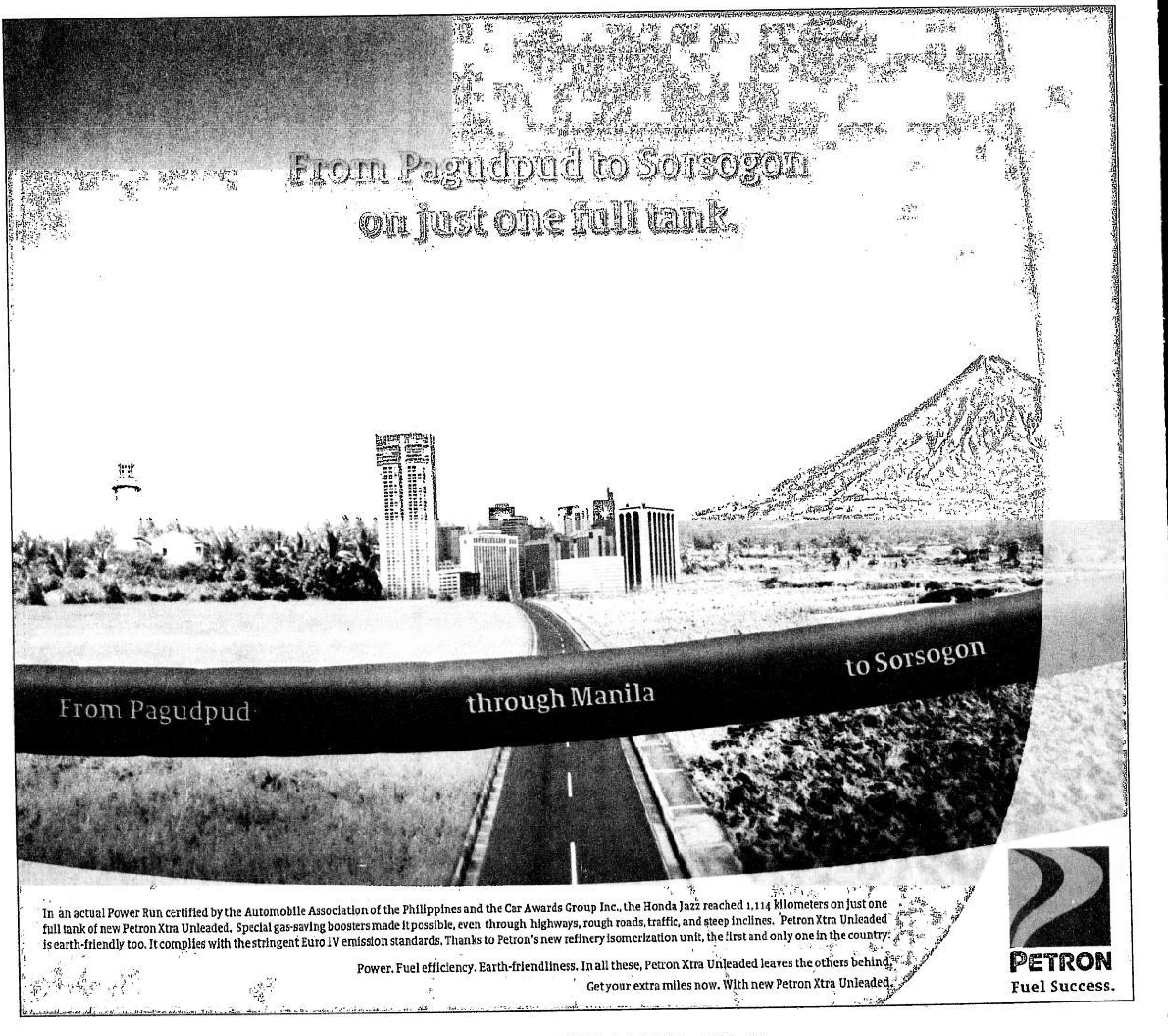

In an actual Power Run certified by the Automobile Association of the Philippines and the Car Awards Group Inc., the Honda Jazz reached 1,114 kilometers on just one full tank of new Petron Xtra Unleaded. Special gas-saving boosters made it possible, even through highways, rough roads, traffic, and steep inclines. Petron Xtra Unleaded is earth-friendly too. It complies with the stringent Euro IV emission standards. Thanks to Petron's new refinery isomerization unit, the first and only one in the country.

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ı horizon ımp Nadal

y chased drop shots, lobs and ed groundstrokes. Some of the came in the tiebreaker, with seemingly more spectacular , and there was another series xchanges with Puerta on the ing a fifth set.

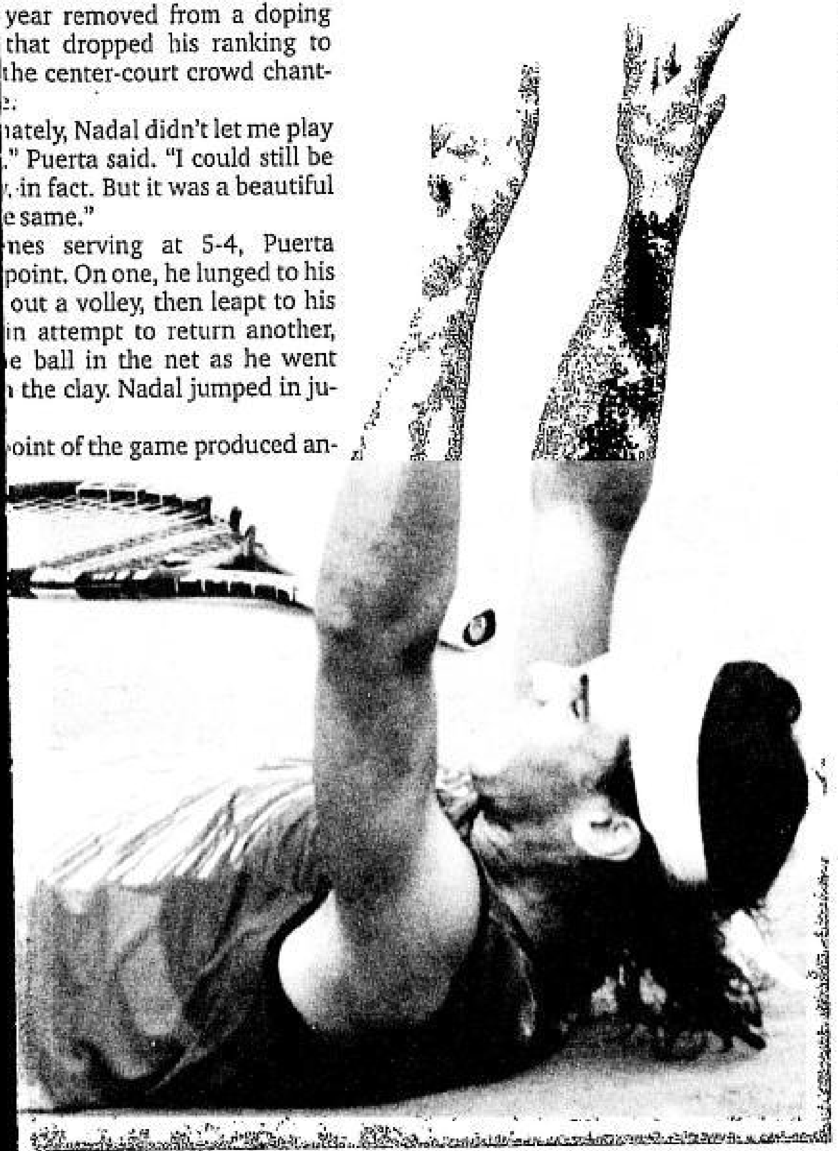
uerta, an unseeded Argentine year removed from a doping that dropped his ranking to the center-court crowd chant-

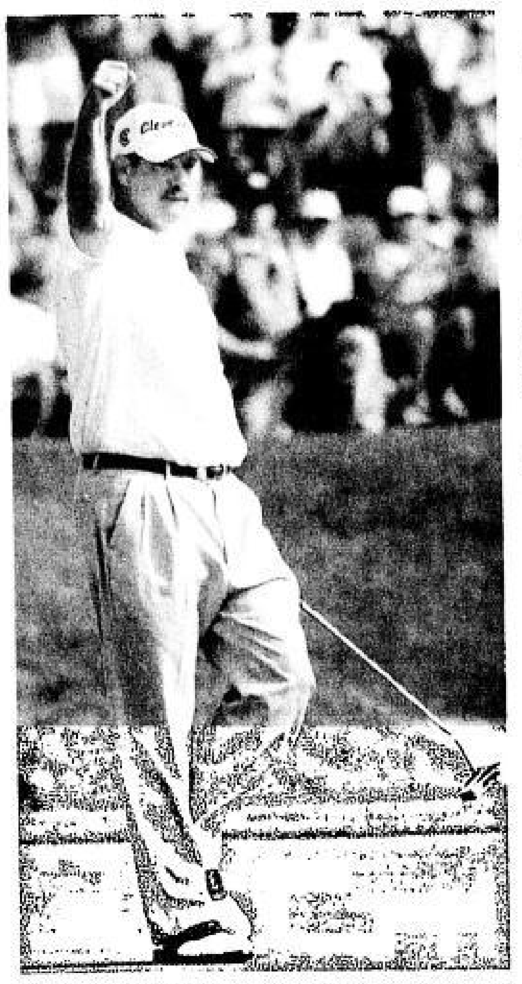
ıately, Nadal didn't let me play ." Puerta said. "I could still be , in fact. But it was a beautiful e same."

nes serving at 5-4, Puerta point. On one, he lunged to his out a volley, then leapt to his in attempt to return another, e ball in the net as he went ı the clay. Nadal jumped in ju-

oint of the game produced another exciting exchange. Nadal charged forward to scoop up a drop shot, and when Puerta slammed a shot back toward him from point-blank range, the Spaniard hit a reflex volley for a winner.

The beaming youngster accepted the championship trophy from one of his idols, Real Madrid soccer star Zinedine Zidane. *AP*





BART Bryant celebrates his par on No. 18. REUTERS

Clutch putts power Bryant past Couples

DUBLIN, Ohio—Bart Bryant hit some dramatic shots at the Memorial, even if no one seemed to notice until an unlikely par on the final hole gave him a one-shot win over Fred Couples on Sunday.

Bryant stole the lead from Couples with a 5-foot birdie on the 17th, then somehow escaped with par after his tee shot went into the hazard down the left side of the 18th fairway. He took a penalty drop, hit into 15 feet, and watched the putt catch enough of the left side of the hole to drop for a 4-under 68.

Couples, playing in the final group behind him, narrowly missed a 10-foot birdie on the 17th, then flew his approach over the 18th green into deep rough, ending his hopes of winning for the first time in two years.

Bryant, who finished at 16-under 272, earned $990,000 and now gets a day off. He was headed for Tampa, Florida on Monday for a US Open qualifier, but his second US PGA Tour victory in the last nine months gave him a spot in the field at Pinehurst No. 2 in two weeks for his first US Open in 11 years.

Bryant, a 42-year-old whose career has been limited by injuries, won for the first time last year at the Texas Open, when the stars were busy playing in the Ryder Cup.

In a wild chase for the lead at muggy Muirfield Village, he emerged the winner with clutch putts along the back nine to overcome Couples.

"There were so many good players up there, I knew somebody would shoot 67 or 68 to win," Bryant said. "I just didn't know it would be me."

Tiger Woods' bid was stopped early by a double bogey at No. 8, and he wound up with a 68 to finish in a tie for third with Bo Van Pelt (68) and Jeff Sluman (72) at 12-under 276. The tie kept Woods from returning to No. 1 in the world.

For Couples, it was a rare chance to win on tour, and he let it slip away despite shots that sent the gallery into a frenzy at times.

Couples' 4-iron into the par-5 15th stopped 6 feet behind the hole, but he had to settle for birdie. Then he found the bunker on the 16th and failed to save par, a two-shot swing when Bryant made birdie on the 17th hole ahead of him. Couples couldn't catch up, and his last hope was a chip on the 18th that ran 35 feet by.

He made that for one last cheer, although it was only good for a 69 and second place. *AP*

Nationals sweep Marlins

WASHINGTON—Ryan Church hit a three-run homer in the eighth inning, lifting the Washington Nationals to a 6-3 win that completed a three-game sweep of the Florida Marlins on Sunday.

The win, coupled with Atlanta's loss to Pittsburgh, put a team called Washington in first place this late in the season for the first time since 1933, when the Washington Senators won the American League pennant.

Church's homer off reliever Matt Perisho broke a 3-all tie and gave the Nationals their seventh win in eight games. They trailed in all seven victories, including 2-0 on Sunday against Marlins starter A.J. Burnett, who appeared to be cruising toward a shutout before allowing three runs in the seventh.

The Nationals have come from behind for 21 of their 31 victories. *AP*

Other National League matches: Astros 6, Cardinals 4; Pirates 5, Braves 2; Phillies 7, Diamondbacks 6; Dodgers 10, Brewers 6;:Cubs 4, Padres 0; Rockies 8, Reds 6; Mets 12, Giants 1, 2nd game.

Sorenstam bags fifth crown this season by 4 shots

GALLOWAY TOWNSHIP, New Jersey—Annika Sorenstam closed with a seven-under-par 64 for a final total of 17-under 196 to post a four-shot victory over Juli Inkster at the $1.4 million LPGA ShopRite Classic.

"It's great. I can't believe the finish," she said.

With a bogey-free round on Sunday that included five birdies and a closing eagle putt from the fringe, Sorenstam won for the fifth time in seven events this season.

She also established herself as the heavy favorite at next week's LPGA Championship, the second major of the season.

Inkster entered the round tied for the lead with Sorenstam. Inkster had four birdies, three on the back nine, and one bogey for a 68 and a solo second place finish at 13-under 200.

Laura Davies followed a course-record nine-under 62 on Saturday with a 68 and finished tied for third with Catriona Matthew (64). *AFP*

Brazil World Cuppers rip Paraguay

SAO PAULO, Brazil—Defending champion Brazil moved within a point of first place in the South American World Cup qualifying group Sunday with an easy 4-1 win over Paraguay.

Brazil, which is in second place in the 10-team South American group with 27 points, got two goals from Ronaldinho and one each from Ze Roberto and Robinho.

The five-time World Cup champions can overtake Argentina for the lead in the group on Wednesday when the two powerhouses meet in Buenos Aires.

In Porto Alegre, Brazil, Ronaldinho put the hosts ahead in the 32nd minute with a penalty into the middle of the net. Brazil was awarded the penalty after a hand ball. *AP*

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J Lo on 'Monster': Freaky and fun

FIRST PERSON

WE HAD a lot of fun making "Monster-in-Law." It was the type of set that you looked forward to going to everyday. Jane Fonda made it a great experience.

I related to my character, Charlie, very well because she does a lot of different things. I mean, we do them for different reasons. I am more decisive than Charlie, but we're both creative.

Slapping pals

Getting slapped by Jane Fonda was very real. It's funny, you know, Jane is really tough and I like to think that I'm tough sometimes, too. We got [to the set] and we were like, "How are we going to do this?" We knew it was a timing thing. There was a stunt coordinator making sure we didn't hurt each other. We said, "Let's just go for it . . . you slap me, I slap you, okay?" So that's what we did, and we were slapping each other a lot—a lot.

For an allergy scene I had to wear prosthetics, which I hate! They are so freaky, right? But it was funny, the actual kind of blowing up of the lips and everything . . .

One of the great things about working with Jane was, it gave me a glimpse into what it must have been like when movies were different. She worked in a different era where it was more about kind of like plays and stories.

I worked with Robert Redford as well, in a movie called "An Unfinished Life," which will be out on July 22. I told him "The Way We Were" was one of my favorite movies because I loved Barbra Streisand and I loved him. And he was like, 'You know, it's a shame you guys don't have scripts like that these days, that are about politics and Hollywood and social issues and a love story all combined into one."

Jane—she would always come to the set very prepared. I like to be very prepared. We'd talk about what we were going to do, and she'd have almost like what was on the page and then like the craziest thing she could think of. We would run the gamut of trying all these different things and it was a lot of fun.

Crazy paparazzi

I have a different story about the paparazzi. It's just surprising to me how aggressive they are these days.

I mean, yesterday on the way home we almost got into an accident. It's crazy. And it's just getting worse and worse and worse. Sometimes I feel like it's a game, like they're playing cops and robbers and they're spies and . . . it's crazy.

JANE Fonda: Why did she do it?

"I HATE prosthetics."

REVIEW

J Fo's comic return

NEW YORK—The possibility of watching Jennifer Lopez and Jane Fonda tear each other apart in "Monster-in-Law" inspires a certain morbid curiosity—something akin to Godzilla vs Mothra, with bronzed skin and blond highlights.

By this point, J Lo and J Fo have created such larger-than-life personae that they are more than mere actresses: They're multimedia empires, separated by a generation.

Humiliating

That's part of the vague allure of "Monster-in-Law," Fonda's first film in 15 years. But it also begs the question: Why would she choose this project—which thrusts her into humiliating physical comedy—to mark her return to the screen?

She could have done anything. She has done everything—except play a true villain, which she gets to do as the movie's titular terror. And while she truly seems to be giving it her all and does exude a certain radiance, the film from director Robert Luketic ("Legally Blonde") and first-time screenwriter Anya Kochoff reduces her to two-dimensional, Joan Crawfordesque divadom.

Sabotage

Fonda plays Viola Fields, a high-powered, veteran news anchor patterned after Barbara Walters, who has a meltdown after she's fired for being too old. But she emerges from psychiatric treatment with the comforting thought that she still has her son—her precious baby boy, Kevin (Michael Vartan)—who has managed to become a hot young surgeon despite Viola's incessant smothering.

Then Kevin brings home his new girlfriend, Lopez's Charlie, just as Viola is struggling to maintain even a tenuous grasp on her mental health and sobriety.

Once the too-good-to-be-true Kevin gets down on one knee and proposes marriage—right in front of his mother, over tea and cake on the terrace—the cartoonish game of sabotage begins. *AP*

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Tips for prospective child stars

(*Continuation*)

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

ANOTHER rule for helping your child attain show biz stardom with fewer negative consequences to his psychological health is to make very sure that, to begin with, he has talent.

This seems to be a no-brainer, but some parents are so enamored with their cutesy-wootsy child's persona that they think this is enough for millions of other people to similarly fall in love with him.

Wrong. Cute is great, but most people won't pay serious money to enjoy it for more than five minutes. To become a show biz star, your child must be a talented actor, singer, dancer or comedian. If he's a "total performer," so much the better.

And he must be really good at it. Most Filipinos can sing pretty well, so if that's all your kid can do, that doesn't make him star material—unless, of course, his looks are so great that audiences will forgive his lack of outstanding talent.

Most of the time, however, even great looks can't fuel a long-running career, so exceptional talent is really key.

What do you do if your kid isn't all that wonderful as a performer? That's where lessons and workshops come in. Some kids go from one workshop to another, and if they really apply themselves to the exercises and their teachers are good, they do improve.

In addition to taking workshops, prospective child talents should also join amateur or professional stage productions, because the best learning is accomplished by doing.

Young talents can also learn a lot from more experienced theater people they work with, especially in terms of the right attitudes and values needed for young performers to last long in the business.

The next rule is, a child talent should have a winning look. This can be subjective at times, but in general, this means that your child should have standout features. Filipino viewers especially dote on a beautiful or cute face—so, if your kid has it, it's money in the bank!

However, due to the local audience's fixation on *mestizo* looks, it's become difficult to tell one *tisoy* starlet apart from another. The generic look has become a liability, so your kid needs to have a unique extra "something" to give him the "winning look" required for success.

That's why we believe that the *tisoy* facial mold need not be a requirement, and that *kayumanggi* lookers should be given their chance to shine.

The local show biz scene has become too predictable, and needs a big infusion of freshness, diversity and even idiosyncratic appeal, and we can only hope that producers and directors will give such varied looks a chance to make it in the biz.

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10:50, 1:00, 3:05,
5:20, 7:25, 10:15
GP

3 STAR WARS III: REVENGE OF THE SITH
11:05, 1:50, 4:40
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SIN CITY R13 12:30,3:00,5.30,8.00,10:30	SHUTTER R13 1:05,3:15,5:25,7:35,9:50	STAR WARS: EPISODE III GP 12:25,3:15

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2 HOUSE OF WAX
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4 STARWARS: EPISODE III
5 LA VISA LOCA
6 A LOT LIKE LOVE
SIN CITY
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9 SAY THAT YOU LOVE ME
10 UNLEASHED
11 COACH CARTER
12 SHUTTER

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1 SIN CITY
2 SHUTTER
3 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
4 HOUSE OF WAX
5 SAY THAT YOU LOVE ME
6 A LOT LIKE LOVE
7 STARWARS: EPISODE III
8 MADAGASCAR

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2 MADAGASCAR
3 SIN CITY
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9 A LOT LIKE LOVE
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4 GUESS WHO

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2 SHUTTER
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Editor **Emmie G. Velarde**

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JUDY Ann thanks Ryan

BIG WINNERS: Ramos, Calzado, Santos, Montano and Cruz

It was an evening of 'statements'—both insightful and incendiary

VICTORY hug: Judy Ann and Ryan Agoncillo

Independents' Day

By Bayani San Diego Jr.
Photos by Jim Guiao Punzalan

INDEPENDENT filmmakers lorded it over the Urian, handed out by the Manunuri ng Pelikulang Pilipino, the country's oldest critics' group at 28 years.

Although known for being fast-paced and well-conceived, this year's Urian Awards ceremony was slightly delayed because of an unexpected downpour and the ensuing flash floods and traffic jams that caused most of the stars—and the trophies—to arrive late.

Organizers had promised a night of audacious "statements," both political and artistic. True to form, the ceremony, held on Saturday at the AFP Theater, was peppered with all sorts of commentary on various show biz issues, from sex-video scandals to onerous taxes imposed on the beleaguered film industry.

Even Urian member Butch Francisco wasn't spared; he was spoofed by host Janno Gibbs in a pre-taped segment on entertainment talk shows. (Co-host Michael V. impersonated Francisco's fellow chat-show host Boy Abunda.)

But the bravest "statement" that night was the selection of two independent movies as the year's Best Picture(s). CM Films' "Panaghoy sa Suba" tied with Sine Olivia and Paul Tañedo Inc.'s "Ebolusyon ng Isang Pamilyang Pilipino."

The rebellious tone was set by the indie pack.

"The revolution has started and it cannot be stopped," Tañedo told INQUIRER Entertainment. "It's sweet that we have been finally recognized at home, after we got all those glowing reviews abroad."

SUNSHINE Cruz, Cesar Montano and Paul Tañedo accept Best Picture trophies

BEST Production Design: Patti Eustaquio, Rishab Tibon and Jun Sabayton

LAV Diaz, Best Screenplay

The digital film has been making the rounds of international film fests and has been screened in Barcelona, Amsterdam, Singapore, Hong Kong, and New York so far.

Tañedo quipped, "The fact that we finished the 10-hour and 43-minute film after 10 years is victory in itself. It was a struggle. We've been through hell and back!"

"Ebolusyon" director Lav Diaz, who also bagged the Best Screenplay prize, agreed with Tañedo. "We are now free! Digital is cinema. We have to embrace this new technology because it could spell liberation for small producers. Actually, there'll be no such thing as small producers and small movies now."

An even more courageous stand was made by one of the recipients for Best Production Design, Jun Sabayton, who won for "Ebolusyon" along with Patti Eustaquio and Rishab Tibon.

"How I wish the big producers would pay movie workers properly," Sabayton candidly remarked in his acceptance speech.

Backstage, Sabayton explained his stand: "It's because we always hear our colleagues complain that they get paid post-dated checks by the major studios."

That is, if they get paid at all.

Quite aptly, Montano dedicated his history-making triple triumph (for Best Actor, Best Director, and Best Picture) to the "small workers in the movies."

"Even though we all know that our movie wasn't a big hit, these awards will inspire us to do more films," said Sunshine Cruz, Montano's wife and associate producer.

"These awards will give independent producers like us the strength and the will to produce more quality movies," Montano attested.

On a lighter note, Judy Ann Santos boldly declared her non-independence that night. She was escorted by constant date Ryan Agoncillo and the couple clasped hands, embraced and kissed when Santos' name was called as Best Actress (for "Sabel").

Santos was in high spirits backstage, as if the tax-evasion charges filed by the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) were a thing of the distant past.

"I am very, very happy," she told INQUIRER Entertainment. "It's true what they say that after a problem, something good happens."

For a moment there, it wasn't clear whether she was referring to her Urian trophy or Ryan.

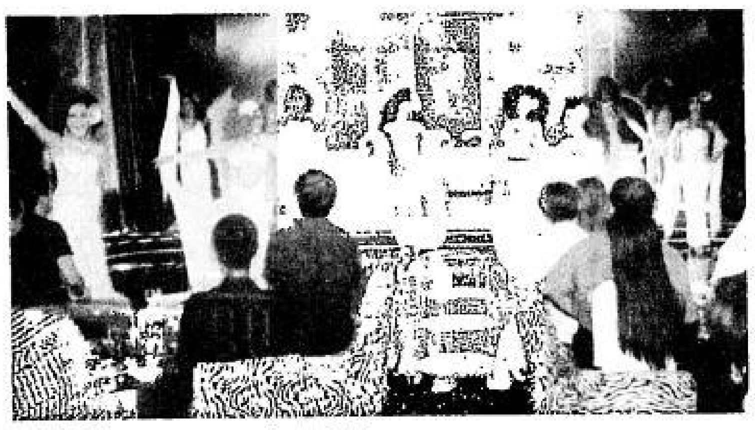
Agoncillo shared his thoughts: "It was a tough race . . . but I was really praying for it because it's the most coveted award in the industry. And I know that she deserves it. I'm proud of her, not only as an actress, but because she's a really good person."

Montano and Santos were first-time Urian winners—just like Best Supporting Actor Wendell Ramos ("Sabel") and Best Supporting Actress Iza Calzado ("Sigaw").

"I was shaking in my seat as the names of the nominees in my category were called out," Calzado recounted.

"I was overwhelmed," Ramos said. "This gives meaning to my craft as an actor."

COUNT 'EM: 24 Dianas!



MWAH! stage was one hot platform.

Double-dozen vision

MALLILIN with Sheryl Cruz, Susan Roces-Poe and Marichu Maceda

WE counted: 24 Diana Rosses there were, to wish Club Mwah!'s Pocholo Mallilin a happy birthday end of May.

The cast of Folies de Mwah! and Bedazzled, the Mandaluyong club's spectacular hit shows, turned out in full force for the celebrity-studded full house. Spotted were: Susan Roces-Poe, German Moreno, Sheryl Cruz, Marichu Vera-Perez Maceda, Pilita Corrales and Nikki Ross; talent manager Dolor Guevarra, make-up artists to-the stars James Cooper and Nes Astilla, movie director Boots Plata, media men Lhar Santiago, Mario Dumaual and Veronica Samio.

Laughing, clapping, shrieking friends and fans cheered the performers on. Not that they needed motivating in any manner or measure. They had been primed for frenzy in this second half of the celebration via an earlier tour de force, a presentation of "The Best of Mwah!"

This was a collection of audience favorites from among the revues presented by the spirited gays-and-gals impersonators troupe since the club's opening just over a year ago.

Needless to say, "Best" had been a treat for the Mwah! devotees present on Pocholo's big night. They never forgot early Folies show-stoppers, including "Cell Block Tango" from "Chicago," "Shanti/Ashtangi" (by Madonna), "Nessun Dorma," and "How Much Is That Doggy?"

Never mind clapping her hands enthusiastically after every number, Roces-Poe was seen slapping her lap merrily with every outrageous antic performed by the diminutive star of the Folies, Karma. In fact, Karma made it a point to address his ad libs and improvs to the hapless Ms Poe, by standing in front of her and demanding that she pay attention.

Ambushed by TV crews on her way out, Susan was only too glad to endorse the Mwah! Folies. "Fabulous," she said. "We should all be very proud of this. We should all see this."

Which of course set Mallilin off on an unprecedented high for the rest of the night. During the Diana Ross revelry, he danced non-stop—on the staircase, at his table, from the balcony—short of disrupting the onstage goings-on.

"I'm so happy!" he said, beaming. Earlier for the TV crews, he delivered an impassioned plea for ample and quantifiable recognition of local talents by the government, by way of supporting tourism, no less.

And then, reminding himself that it was a night of revelry, put together by colleagues led by Mwah! co-owner Cris Nicolas, the birthday boy promptly changed gears and jumped back into the party.

AIN'T NO mountain high enough

SHOW TIME

This Satya doesn't hurt

By Pocholo Concepcion
Contributor

THE BERKLEE College of Music in Boston, Massachusetts is the alma mater of veteran record producer Quincy Jones, jazz guitarist Pat Metheny, rock star Joe Perry of Aerosmith, and also Filipino saxophonist Tots Tolentino.

A new group led by a Spanish-Filipino is adding luster to Berklee as a terrific breeding ground for musicians.

The group is Satya, "from the Sanskrit term for truth," says Marcos Sainz, 26-year-old keyboardist, arranger, composer and co-founder. He was born in the Philippines; his mother is the former beauty queen and singer-composer Charina Zaragoza.

"We're not a jazz band," Sainz clarifies, "although we do play around with styles that actually had its roots in jazz."

Sainz majored in computer engineering and graduated summa cum laude from Columbia University in New York. Before pursuing music full-time, he worked as a software engineer and designer for a Silicon Valley company.

In 2003 Sainz shifted careers.

At Berklee, where he's now a scholar, Sainz set up Satya with Juan Galiardo, who is from Seville, Spain, also plays piano and keyboards and graduated magna cum laude from the music school. The other members, also Berklee scholars or cum laude graduates:

Miguel Gandelman, from Rio de Janeiro, who plays tenor and soprano sax; Alexei Gordeev, from Moscow, alto sax and flute; Voro Garcia, from Valencia, plays trumpet; Mark Kelley, from Houston, plays bass; Jeriel Johnson, from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, plays drums; and Nadine Ford, from Long Island, lone female vocalist.

Manager Patrick Reyno brought Satya here to Manila for a performance at the Harbor Garden of the Westin Philippine Plaza yesterday. They are conducting a workshop today, 4 p.m., at the University of Santo Tomas.

Judging from their CD demo, Satya is one truth that does not hurt.

GISELLE Sanchez

Tonight

Giselle Sanchez stars in "G-Spot" tonight at Merk's Bar Bistro.

The "naughty musical" also features Aretha and the Souled-Out band.

Next month, Giselle will performer at the casino owners' convention in Macau.

SATYA

ENTERTAINMENT

E-mail: pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

Editor Emmie G. Velarde

Text us your feedback: inquirer ent name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

WITH Sarah Jessica Parker

Larry King aiming for 45,000 interviews

A RECORD 40,000 interviews—what's your secret?

I'm kind of an ad-lib interviewer, I don't over-prepare for my guests. I try to ask questions that the guy on the street would want to know, human questions, not "press conference" questions. My approach is always non-threatening and non-judgmental—I try to reach the feelings of my guests. I keep my questions short and the questions begin with, "Why." I am most fascinated with what makes people tick.

TAKE FIVE

You have been with CNN 20 years—do you remember the first show you did and who stands tallest among your remarkable guests?

The first guest I had, in 1985, was then New York Gov. Mario Cuomo. It's pretty tough to choose the most memorable, but the one who stands out for me is Frank Sinatra. I was a huge fan of his and we had a great time.

Who has made you really laugh?

Jim Carrey, Robin Williams, Jerry Seinfeld, and the legendary, late great George Burns. But no one is funnier to me than Don Rickles.

Who stands out among the powerful political figures you've guested?

So many—Yitzak Rabin, Yasser Arafat and King Hussein of Jordan . . . Egyptian president Mohamed Hosni Mubarak was an amazing interview as well. I've had the pleasure of interviewing every United States president since Richard Nixon—Gerald Ford, Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton and George W. Bush . . . Margaret Thatcher . . . Ronald Reagan. I spent a fascinating hour with Tony Blair in Washington D.C.

Who is left for you to interview? Who are the next scoops?

Prince Charles and Camilla is the next big interview I want.

Do you enjoy doing this still?

Are you kidding? I still get a kick out of interviewing people. I am fascinated by people and what makes them who they really are.

How many more interviews are you looking at before you put away the mike?

I am well on my way to 45,000 interviews . . . with no plans to put away the mike.

(CNN International is marking its 25th anniversary this month.)

Cheryl Cosim is glad Willie has moved on

. . .and she'd really rather talk about the weather

By Nini Valera

ABS-CBN weather girl Cheryl Cosim has weathered a few storms in her life.

One of these is her failed relationship with game show host Willie Revillame, who will walk down the aisle on Tuesday with former beauty queen Liz Almora.

"Sorry, I'm not saying anything," Cheryl told a camera crew of the show biz talk show "The Buzz" last week. "All I can say is I've never been this happy. But sorry, I cannot say anything [about Willie's marriage]. It's been three, four years [after we broke up]. Let's leave them alone. I'm so private . . . *sila na lang*."

Badgered for a statement, Cheryl, 31, who's still single, refused to budge.

"Once I say something, it's not gonna stop," she told the interviewer firmly. "I'd really appreciate it if you'd respect my privacy. When it comes to my personal life, I could say something. But about his (Willie's) life, it's not my business anymore.

But to INQUIRER Entertainment, Cheryl said: "I guess it's something that will always be there because he's show biz and he's on TV also. But I really don't think we should keep talking about it because I have moved on and I'm glad that he has moved on, too."

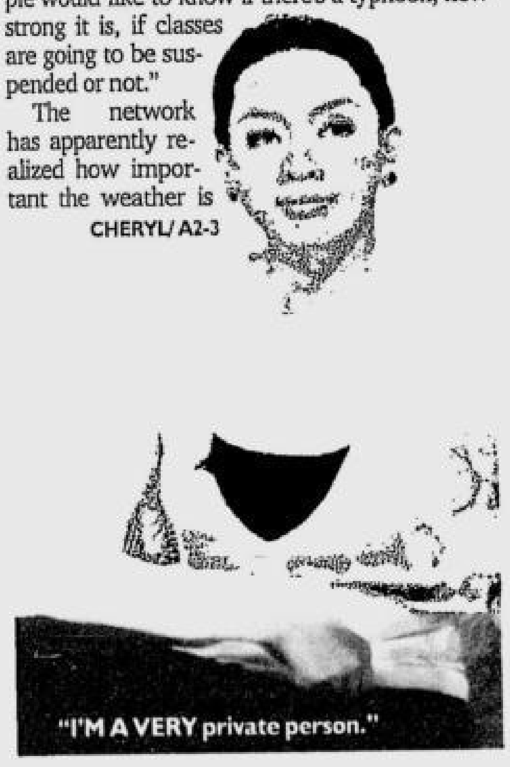
Cheryl would rather talk about the weather than about Willie, in more ways than one. She said she was set to produce and deliver the weather report daily on the revitalized "Magandang Umaga Pilipinas," ABS-CBN's morning news and magazine program.

There's more to reporting the weather than just reading from a script, she enlightened INQUIRER Entertainment during an exclusive interview last Tuesday.

"Especially in June, the *bagyo* (typhoon) season," Cheryl said. "We'll probably air the weather at the beginning of the show because a lot of people would like to know if there's a typhoon, how strong it is, if classes are going to be suspended or not."

The network has apparently realized how important the weather is

CHERYL/ A2-3



"I'M A VERY private person."

INQUIRER TV GUIDE

Tuesday June 7 2005

club tv
Laura Jea
June 18 Saturday 6pm
feel_the_vibe
ABC

ClickTheCity.com

Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema				Showbiz No. 1 (4.25 PM)	Yu-Gi-Oh! (5.10 PM)	Meteor Garden Full Edition		TV Patrol World		Mga Anghel Na Walang Langit	Ikaw Ang Lahat Sa Akin	Memories Of Bali	Qpids	Stained Glass	Bora			Insider
ABC 5			EZ Shop		FIBA (Reruns)				Sentro	Lizzie Mcguire	ABC Action Movies				Big News	The Probe Team Documentaries		ESPN Golf	
GMA 7	Saang Sulok Ng Langit	Now and Forever	Glass Shoes	One Piece	Flame Of Recca	Full House		24 Oras		Darna		Encantadia	Extra Challenge		All About Eve	Bahay Mo Ba 'To?			Saksi
RPN 9		Metro TV Shopping	Defenders Of The Earth	Hey Arnold!	As Told By Ginger	Wild Thornberries	Sponge Bob	The Insider	Tough Enough	7 Days		Medium		Cold Case		Newswatch Now	Tuesday Night Treat		
IBC 13		Lifestyle		EZ Shop		Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Pangarap Kong Jackpot		Shakey's V-League		Hope 1-Million All Filipino Open					IBC News Tonite	Up Close And Personal	
JackTV	Just For Laughs	Just For Laughs	Hip Hop Nation	WWE Bottomline		WWE Afterburn		X-Play	Banzai	Mad TV		Trigger Happy TV	Primetime Glick	South Park	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Stripperella	Family Guy	Viva Hot	
Nickelodeon	Blues Clues	Rugrats	The Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	All That	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	100 Deeds of Eddie McDowd	The Amanda Show	The Adventures Of Jimmy Neutron	Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	As Told By Ginger	Yakkity Yak	Chalkzone	Rocket Power	Hey Arnold!	The Wild Thornberrys	The Angry Beavers	Rugrats
MYX		Urban MYX	MYX Backtrax	Pop MYX	OPM MYX	Take 5	My MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		Mellow MYX	Rock MYX	Pop MYX	Urban MYX	Top Of The Pops	MYX [illegible]	My MYX	MYX Backtrax	OPM MYX	Mellow MYX
ETC		Good Morning Miami	Knock First	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Elimidate	Change of Heart	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	JKX	Simple Life	One Tree Hill		Who Wants To Marry My Dad 2		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
Studio 23				PBL Game 2				Ragnarok	Project Arms	Wazzup Wazzup	Angel			Smallville		News Central	Oprah		The Men's Room
AXN		CSI: Miami		CSI: Miami				The Associates		Boomtown		Ripley's Believe It or Not		CSI: NY (Season I)		The Amazing Race 7		The World's Most Extreme Races	
Star World	Frasier	The Bold & The Beautiful		Hollywood Squares	Home Improvement	Buffy The Vampire Slayer		The Simpsons	The Drew Carey Show	Star News Asia	Friends	Charmed		Concerts On Star		Miss Match		Friends	Charmed
CNN		Business International		Larry King Live		World News	World Sport	Business International		World News	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia		Your World Today	
National Geographic		Air Crash Investigation		Seconds From Disaster		Interpol Investigates		Egypt Detectives. Mystery Of The First Egyptians	Africa From The Ground Up	Wow		About Asia		National Geographic Specials		Air Crash Investigation		Seconds From Disaster	
Solar Sports				TV Shopping		Women's Volleyball '04			Kotv Magazine	WTA '05 Nasdaq			Sports Desk	NBA Eastern Conf. Finals Game7					Destination Finals
Lifestyle Network	Secret Gardens	The Fix	Mission Organization	Carol Duvall	Molto Mario	Hot Off The Grill	Good Eats	Extreme Cuisine	Unwrapped	Passion For Dessert	Second Look		Look For Less	Life & Style		Clean House		Road & Track	Back To Basics
HBO			Rapid Exchange			Club Paradise (5.05 PM)			Evil Never Dies (6.40 PM)			And Starring Pancho Villa As Himself (8.10 PM)				Six Feet Under 5: Untitled		Maid In Manhattan	
Star Movies			River's Edge			Rocky V (5.10 PM)				Opening Night (6.55 PM)	Ozzie (7.25 PM)			MXP: Most Extreme Primate			The Hot Chick (10.35PM)		
Cartoon Network	Scooby-Doo Show	The All New Popeye Show		Tom & Jerry Show	The Woody Woodpecker Show	Ed, Edd N Eddy	Codename: Kids Next Door	X-Men Evolution	Static Shock	Gundam Wing	Shaman King	The Looney Tunes Show		The Powerpuff Girls	Dexter's Laboratory	Time Squad	Thundercats	He-Man & The Masters Of The Universe	Gundam Seed
ESPN						NBA Anthology Down Low: Life in the D-League					World Snooker Tour China Open								
Disney Channel	Mr Bean: The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Art Attack/Untalkative Bunny	So Little Time	Buzz Lightyear Of Star Command	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr Bean: The Animated Series	House Of Mouse	Recess: Taking The 5th Grade			So Little Time	Sabrina, The Animated Series	Mickey Mouse and Friends	Chip N Dale's Rescue Rangers	Princess of Thieves	
Cinemax		Edge Of Madness (3.15 PM)				Anzio				Christine (7.15 PM)				Pinata: Survival Island			Empire Of The Sun (10.25PM)		
Hallmark Channel	Who's The Boss	Just Cause		HCA: The Fairytaler	Sesame Street		Mad About You	Who's The Boss	Bewitched			Just Cause					Missing (10.35PM)		
Discovery Channel		Civilisations				Wild Spaces		Ultimate Discovery		Rides		Human Discovery		Wild Discovery		Ultimate Discovery		Science Mysteries	
MTV Philippines			Hangin Out at MTV		MTV Get Spotted		TRL		Ask Mayonnaise	MTV Divas		Cameron & Dave	Room Raiders	High School Stories	I Want A Famous Face	On Board at MTV	Whatever Things	VH1: Video Collection	
Sports Plus		French Open '05 Quarterfinals				Arena Football Conference Championship						World Poker Tour ep 10 Hollywood				World Greatest Auto Show		Nopi Tunerversion	BD 8 French Riviera

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GALLERIA 632-9115/16

1 STAR WARS Episode III • THX
12:40 3:40 6:40 9:40
2 SIN CITY
11:50 2:20 4:50 7:20 9:50
3 COACH CARTER
10:40 1:30 4:20 7:10 10:00
4 A LOT LIKE LOVE
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00
5 SAY THAT YOU LOVE ME
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00
6 MADAGASCAR
11:10 1:20 3:30 5:40 7:50 10:00
7 HOUSE OF WAX
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
8 LA VISA LOCA
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00
9 UNLEASHED
12:05 2:35 5:05 7:35 10:00
10 SHUTTER
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

1 SAY THAT LOVE ME
10:30 12:45 3:00 5:15 7:30 9:45
2 HOUSE OF WAX
10:30 12:45 3:00 5:15 7:30 9:50
3 STAR WARS Episode III
10:30 1:25 4:20 7:10 10:00
4 UNLEASHED
10:30 12:45 3:00 5:15 7:30 9:45
5 MADAGASCAR
11:00 1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50
6 A LOT LIKE LOVE
10:20 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10.00
7 SIN CITY
10:20 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

METRO EAST 682-8193 • 682-8199

1 SHUTTER
10:50 12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00
2 MADAGASCAR
10:50 12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00
3 LA VISA LOCA
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4 UNLEASHED
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5 SIN CITY
11:30 2:15 5:00 7:45 10:30
6 A LOT LIKE LOVE
11:50 2:30 5:10 7:50 10:30
7 STAR WARS Episode III
11:00 1:45 4:30 7:15 10:00
8 SAY THAT YOU LOVE ME
10:20 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

NOVALICHES 935-3229/39

1 STAR WARS Episode III
11:20 2:20 5:20 8:25
2 SIN CITY
10:20 12:50 3:20 5:50 8:25
3 SAY THAT YOU LOVE ME
11:50 2:10 4:30 6:40 9:00
4 UNLEASHED
1:20 3:40 6:00 8:25
5 COACH CARTER
10:30 1:00 3:30 6:00 8:30
6 RESERVE
7 A LOT LIKE LOVE
11:00 1:20 3:40 6:10 8:30
8 RESERVE

PIONEER 687-5378

1 SIN CITY
2 MADAGASCAR
3 SAY THAT YOU LOVE ME
4 A LOT LIKE LOVE

CITISQUARE MALABON 288-2575

1 HOUSE OF WAX
2 SAY THAT YOU LOVE ME
3 STAR WARS Episode III
4 SIN CITY

CAINTA 240-4668

1 STAR WARS Episode III
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3 A LOT LIKE LOVE
4 MADAGASCAR

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2 SAY THAT YOU LOVE ME
3 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR
4 LA VISA LOCA
5 STAR WARS Episode III
6 MADAGASCAR

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2 SAY THAT YOU LOVE ME
3 MADAGASCAR
4 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
5 ONG BAK
6 LA VISA LOCA

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2 MADAGASCAR
3 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR
4 SAY THAT YOU LOVE ME
5 IN GOOD COMPANY
6 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS

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G1 GLORIETTA 1	1 UNLEASHED	2 SIN CITY	3 MADAGASCAR	4 SAY THAT YOU LOVE ME
G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 A LOT LIKE LOVE	2 SIN CITY	3 THX HOUSE OF WAX 1:10, 3:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 COACH CARTER	5 SHUTTER	6 MADAGASCAR	7 STAR WARS EP. 3
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 FRENCH SPRING FILM FESTIVAL	2 A LOT LIKE LOVE 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 6:40,9:50		
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX A LOT LIKE LOVE 11:45, 2:05, 4:25, 6:45, 9:05, 11:25 GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX STAR WARS EP. 3 12:30, 3:15 GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 COACH CARTER 12:30, 3:15, 6:00, 8:45, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	4 MADAGASCAR 30, 1:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	5 SIN CITY 1:20, 3:50, 6:20, 8:50, 11:20 GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX MADAGASCAR	2 STAR WARS EP. 3		
	3 A LOT LIKE LOVE	4 COACH CARTER	5 SIN CITY	
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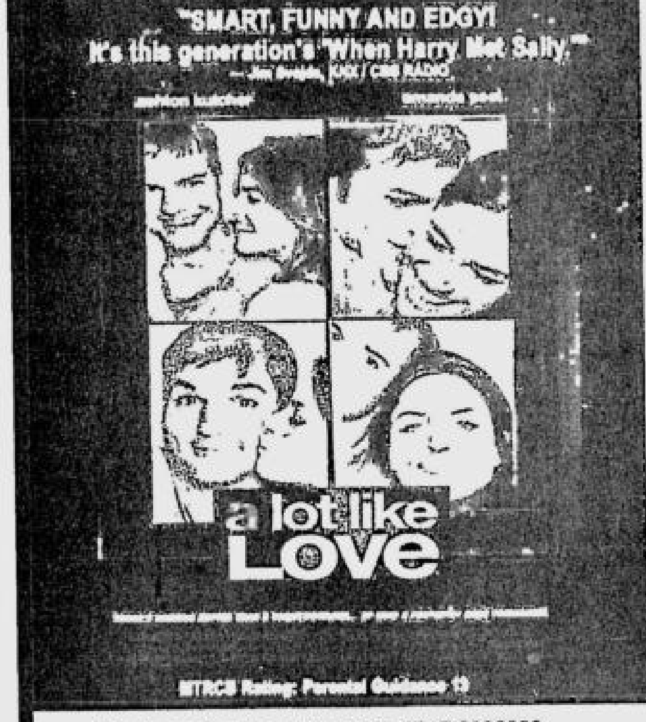
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June 3 - 15	10th French Film Festival regular run (Greenbelt 1 Artfilm)
June 2 - 19	Paris Off Color Exhibit (Greenbelt 3 cinema lobby)
June 6	Indios Bravos Dance Performance (Greenbelt 1, Onstage) 8:30pm
June 11 & 12	Passage des Emballés Street Theater (Greenbelt 3) 2pm and 6pm
June 13 - 30	The Man Who Planted Trees Art Exhibit (Glorietta Artspace)
June 14	Indoor Circus by Camille Bortel (Greenbelt 1, Onstage) 8:00pm
June 17 - 19	10th French Film Festival regular run (Ayala Center Cebu)
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Banderas shines as Pancho Villa

REVIEW

ANTONIO Banderas (left) is "unexpectedly delightful."

By Oliver M. Pulumbarit
Contributor

AND WE thought reality television was exploitative.

"And Starring Pancho Villa as Himself" showcases Antonio Banderas' impressive portrayal of the infamous Mexican revolutionary in the HBO original movie directed by Bruce Beresford ("Driving Miss Daisy"). It chronicles the life of one of the precursors of media-manipulation, a historical figure who got paid by Americans to film his actual exploits during the country's bloody uprisings in 1913.

Banderas, in a rare bravura performance that combines dark charisma and cartoony embellishment, captivates as the rebel leader whose many sides were explored by multi-awarded writer Larry Gelbart ("Tootsie"). It's not often that the actor is able to cut loose with serious roles, and his recent appearances in the "Spy Kids" movies do not exactly highlight his acting skills. So this is quite unexpectedly delightful. In fact, he received Emmy and Golden Globes nominations for this role.

Bemoustached, cunning and treading the thin line between being friend and foe, the rogue Francisco "Pancho" Villa allowed American company Mutual Films access to his real-life liberation efforts against Mexico's Huerta dictatorship for $25,000 in gold and 20 percent of the profits. It's a union that was way ahead of its time, a cunning partnership of propaganda and viewership that would make evil network empires of today proud.

"And Starring Pancho Villa as Himself" is particularly relevant because of its timely dissection of political leaders' unending quest for the best image and the amassing of more sympathetic followers through celebrity. As the title suggests, the revolutionary himself briefly appeared in the film-within-the-film, albeit in a dream sequence that declares his best intentions for his fellow Mexicans.

This TV movie capably portrays the tragic figure as a ruthless Robin Hood, and like many who milk their 15 minutes of fame to the very last drop, Villa doesn't translate as nicely to the audience as he had hoped. However, despite some graphic, gory scenes, "And Starring…" is a pleasure to watch.

The ensemble cast is a good one, most of the members having made prior appearances on TV. Eion Bailey ("Dawson's Creek") is noteworthy as the production assistant who experiences the battlefield firsthand with his camera crew. Kyle Chandler ("Early Edition") is funny as the young Villa. Gorgeous Alexa Davalos ("Angel") plays his much-adored co-star. Anthony Stewart Head ("Buffy") also appears briefly as a ranch owner. Fellow English actor Jim Broadbent plays film exec Harry Aitken.

The sleek production and memorable performances make for an interesting take on the fickleness of real-life fame. It's an oddly intriguing story replete with enthusiasm and disillusionment, and lessons that have yet to be learned by today's ratings-and-hype junkies.

("And Starring Pancho Villa as Himself" premieres over HBO Asia at 8:10 tonight.)

Cheryl Cosim is glad . . .

From page A2-1

to viewers, and how a veteran weather girl could pull a nation through a tropical depression, according to Cheryl.

"People think that doing the weather is *medyo mababaw* (a bit shallow)," she observed. "But it's really hard work. When I was just starting out, I would go to Pag-Asa about three times a week and ask them all sorts of questions. I would try to understand all their terms. It was like a crash course—how a typhoon starts as a low pressure area and escalates to a tropical depression, to a typhoon, to a super typhoon. It's hard to do a report if you don't understand what you are reporting on. It would eventually show, that you don't know what you're talking about. So I learned all I could."

The news, too

She learned that predicting the weather was not exactly rocket science, Cheryl said, "so what we could really do best was to monitor."

On the morning show, Cheryl will also be in charge of monitoring and reporting on earthquakes and volcanic activities. She cautioned: "With all the abnormalities and the global warming, you can't really explain why [there are changes in the weather patterns], why we have El Niño, things like that."

Part of the deal with ABS-CBN is for Cheryl to also deliver the news.

"I told them I'd do the weather only if they let me do the news," Cheryl revealed. "I'd also like to gear toward health because I have a health show. At some point, I have to graduate (from the weather news)."

So now she will be doing breaking news in the afternoon. She also has a show with Cito Beltran, "Kumusta Ka Bayan," on The Filipino Channel.

Two years

"Career-wise and in my personal life, I've never been happier," Cheryl reiterated. "I'm now with a man, a very private person. The relationship is very private and very intimate. We've been together for 10 months."

She is giving herself only two more years in the business.

"I'm 31, and I'm not getting any younger," she said. "What I want is a family."

A college dropout from a community college in the United States, Cheryl was only 16 when she had to start working and support her family. Her parents had long separated, but her father had been able to petition her and three of her sisters.

"In the States, it's so hard when you depend only on your dad, so we had to do our part," Cheryl narrated. "I started in McDonald's at age 16, worked there for a year. Whatever I could save, I would send it to my mom. When I turned 18, I found more normal and better-paying jobs. I worked in an electronics company, a bakery and a retail store."

She eventually returned to the Philippines, and in 1996, joined ABS-CBN as the weather girl.

"I had a hard time proving myself," she recalled. "The only thing that I could do was to prove them wrong. My peers graduated from UP, Ateneo, University of Seattle. I just finished high school at St. Mary's College. My advantage was that I had stayed in the US for a long time—which made me more aggressive."

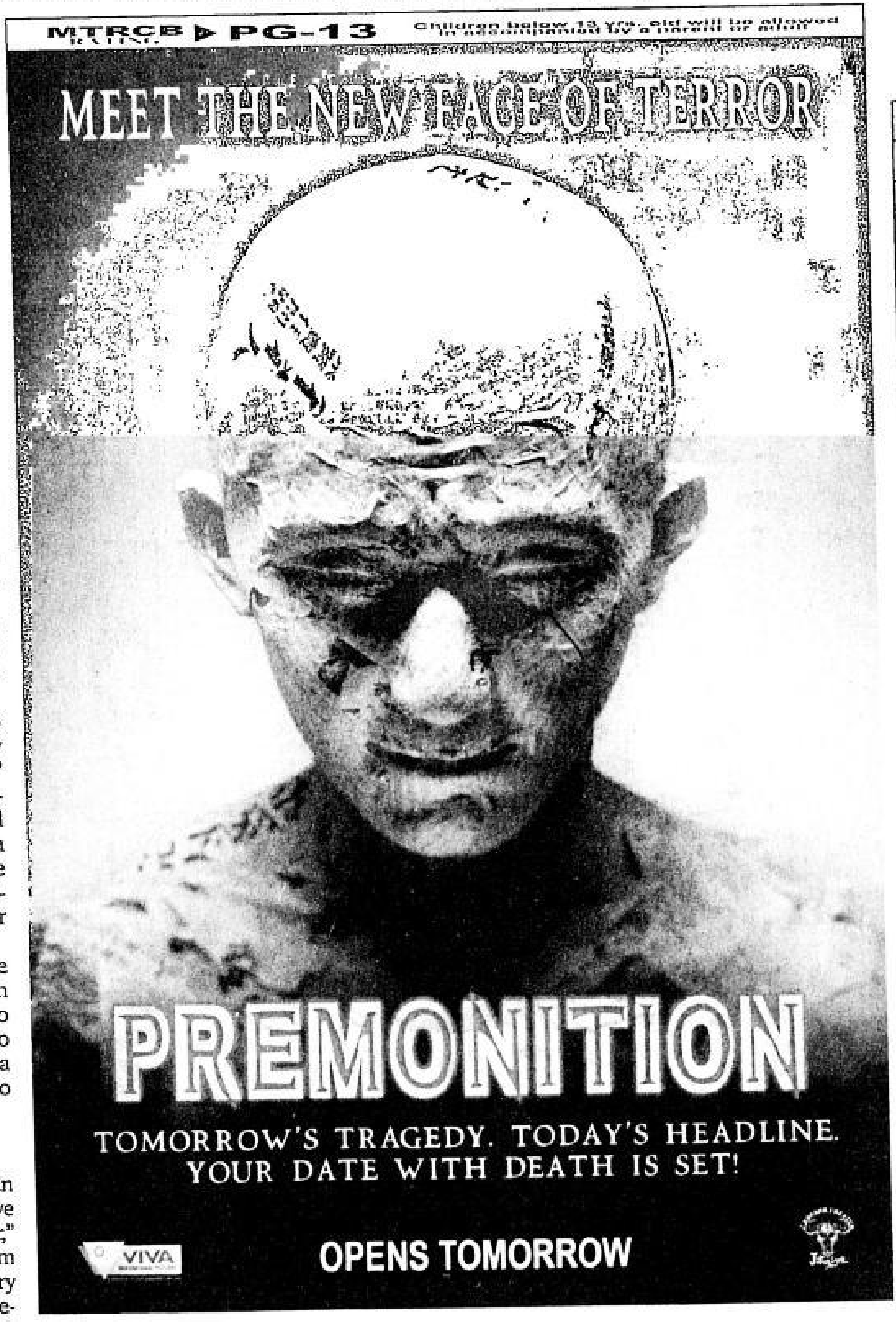
Grateful

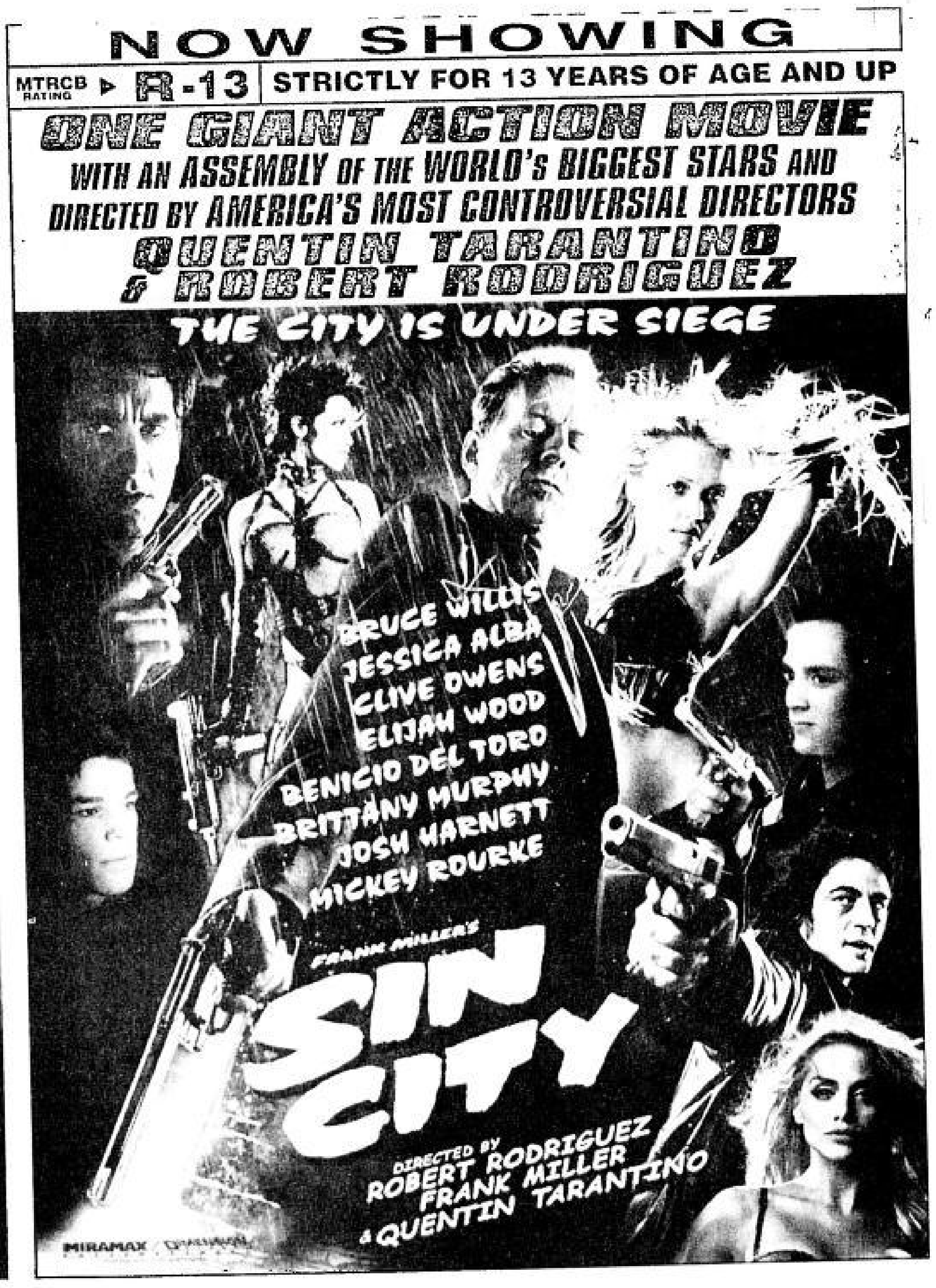
The money she earned during her first few years in ABS-CBN was "good enough for me to send my siblings to school."

It made her a better person, she confided. "I'm just grateful that we're all normal, *walang rebelde*. I'm sending just one more sister to school and she's going to be done in October, so I'm excited. After that, I have to start saving for myself."

She might go back to college and take up broadcast journalism, she said. "Going back to school is something that I could still do. So that's okay. I've seen my siblings finish."

AI-AI WAS THERE
And boy, did she break some hearts! Ai-Ai de las Alas recently starred in a series of performances in the United States, billed as "The Comedy Queen On Tour 2005—*Ang Tanging Ina Sa Amerika*! A Mother's Day Comedy Concert." She wowed 'em in Chicago, San Francisco, Las Vegas and Honolulu.


MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13
MEET THE NEW FACE OF TERROR
PREMONITION
TOMORROW'S TRAGEDY. TODAY'S HEADLINE.
YOUR DATE WITH DEATH IS SET!
VIVA
OPENS TOMORROW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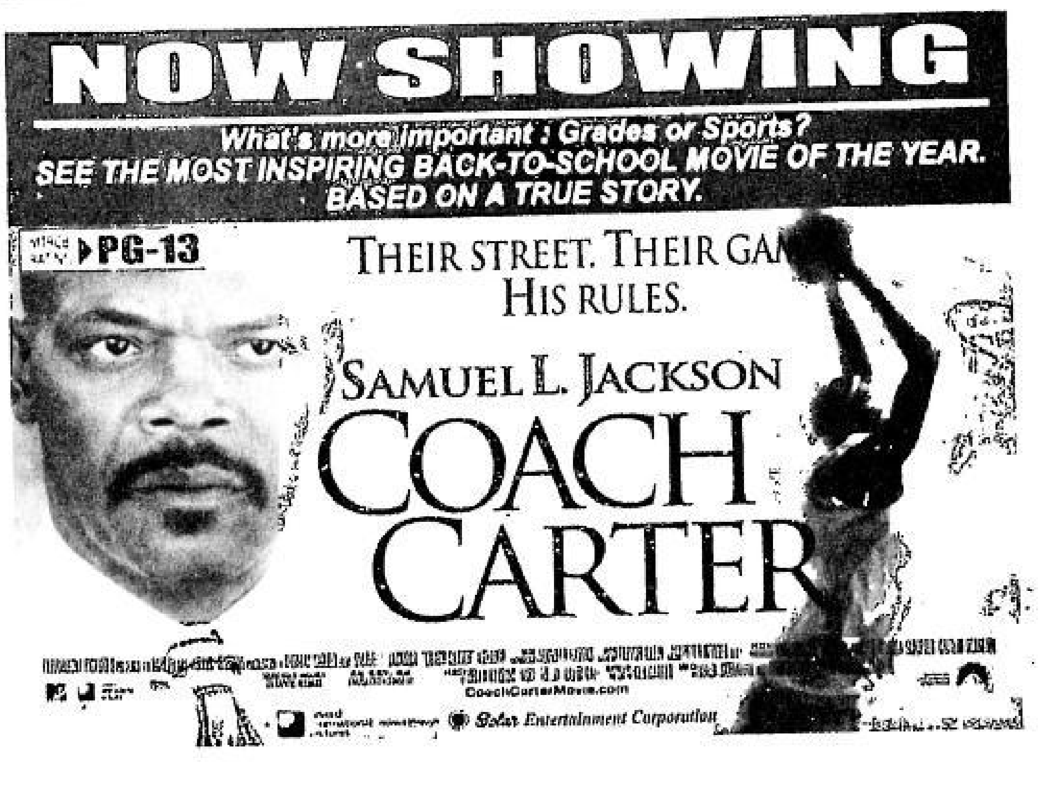
MTRCB RATING ▶ R-13
STRICTLY FOR 13 YEARS OF AGE AND UP
ONE GIANT ACTION MOVIE
WITH AN ASSEMBLY OF THE WORLD's BIGGEST STARS AND
DIRECTED BY AMERICA'S MOST CONTROVERSIAL DIRECTORS
QUENTIN TARANTINO
& ROBERT RODRIGUEZ
THE CITY IS UNDER SIEGE
BRUCE WILLIS
JESSICA ALBA
CLIVE OWENS
ELIJAH WOOD
BENICIO DEL TORO
BRITTANY MURPHY
JOSH HARNETT
MICKEY ROURKE
FRANK MILLER'S
SIN CITY
DIRECTED BY
ROBERT RODRIGUEZ
FRANK MILLER
& QUENTIN TARANTINO
MIRAMAX

MTRCB RATING ▶ G
FOR GENERAL AUDIENCE
DON'T BE LEFT OUT!
CATCH
NOW SHOWING
MADAGASCAR
NOW!
YOU'VE GOT TO MOVE-IT MOVE-IT!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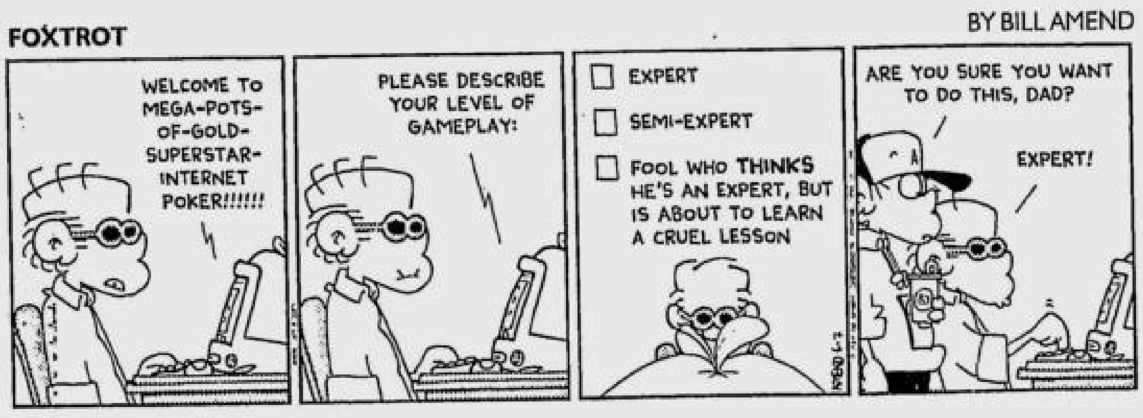
What's more important : Grades or Sports?
SEE THE MOST INSPIRING BACK-TO-SCHOOL MOVIE OF THE YEAR.
BASED ON A TRUE STORY.
▶ PG-13
THEIR STREET. THEIR GA
HIS RULES.
SAMUEL L. JACKSON
COACH CARTER
CoachCarterMovie.com
Solar Entertainment Corporation

· PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER ·
ComicRelief
e-mail feedback at arts@inquirer.com.ph

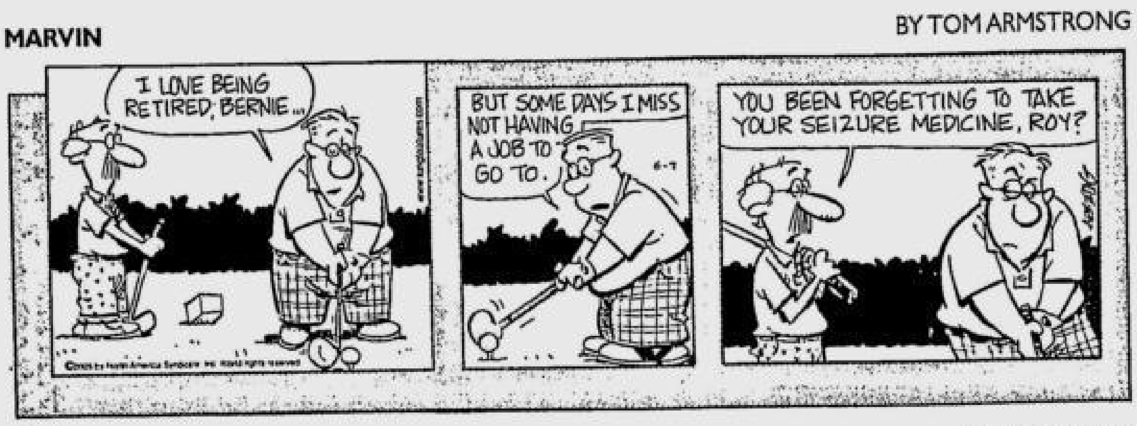
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


WELCOME TO MEGA-POTS-OF-GOLD-SUPERSTAR-INTERNET POKER!!!!!!
PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR LEVEL OF GAMEPLAY:
☐ EXPERT
☐ SEMI-EXPERT
☐ FOOL WHO THINKS HE'S AN EXPERT, BUT IS ABOUT TO LEARN A CRUEL LESSON
ARE YOU SURE YOU WANT TO DO THIS, DAD?
EXPERT!

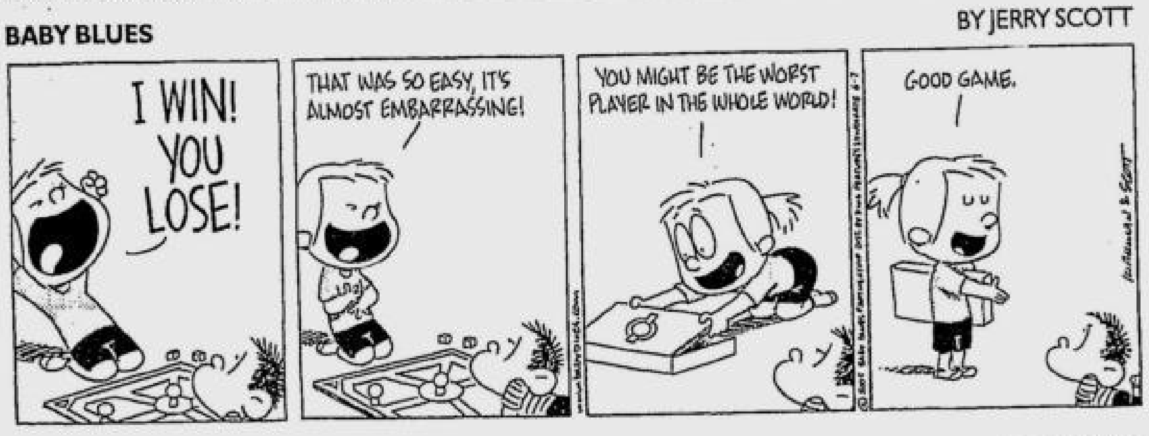
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


I LOVE BEING RETIRED, BERNIE...
BUT SOME DAYS I MISS NOT HAVING A JOB TO GO TO.
YOU BEEN FORGETTING TO TAKE YOUR SEIZURE MEDICINE, ROY?

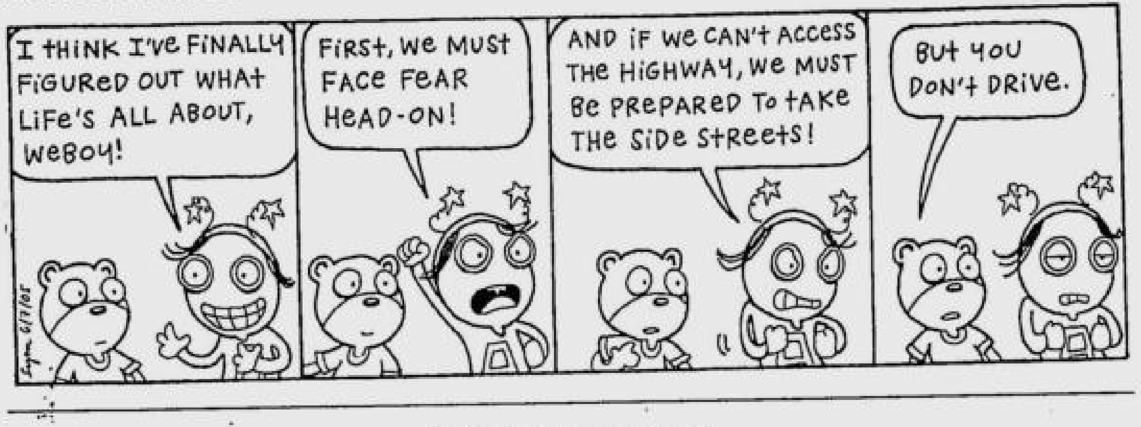
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


I WIN! YOU LOSE!
THAT WAS SO EASY, IT'S ALMOST EMBARRASSING!
YOU MIGHT BE THE WORST PLAYER IN THE WHOLE WORLD!
GOOD GAME.

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


I think I've finally figured out what life's all about, Weboy!
First, we must face fear head-on!
And if we can't access the highway, we must be prepared to take the side streets!
But you don't drive.

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're extremely entertaining and charming. Everyone enjoys the jokes you often play. In part, this is because you have your finger on the pulse of the public. You express yourself well through body language and gestures. You're definitely physical and sensuous. Your closest relationships are your focal point this year.
Birthdate of: Karl Urban, actor; Liam Neeson, actor; Anna Kournikova, tennis player.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Don't push your opinions down the throats of others today, although that is what you're tempted to do. It's OK to feel strongly about things, but you have to allow others the same privilege as well.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): A clash of wills about financial matters or shared possessions is possible today. (Actually, it is likely.) Knowing this, try to be as patient as you can when the matter arises.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Verbal power struggles with others are likely today. You're fixated on one idea, and you intend to get your way. Unfortunately, somebody else feels the same way! (Have patience.)

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): This is an excellent day to do research or seek out answers about anything you're interested in. You'll have no trouble keeping your mind on the job at hand.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Clashes with friends or groups you might be dealing with are likely today. People are tempted to influence others through propaganda. Don't fall for this. (And don't do it yourself.)

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Avoid power struggles with bosses and parents. You can't win. Mighty Pluto opposes Mercury. People are entrenched in their own opinions today. Furthermore, they want agreement from others.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You're fascinated by studying something today. Philosophy, religion, politics or anything related to school completely absorbs you now. You want the whole truth about something.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Your research skills are fabulous today! You want to get to the bottom of things. You want to know what makes something tick.

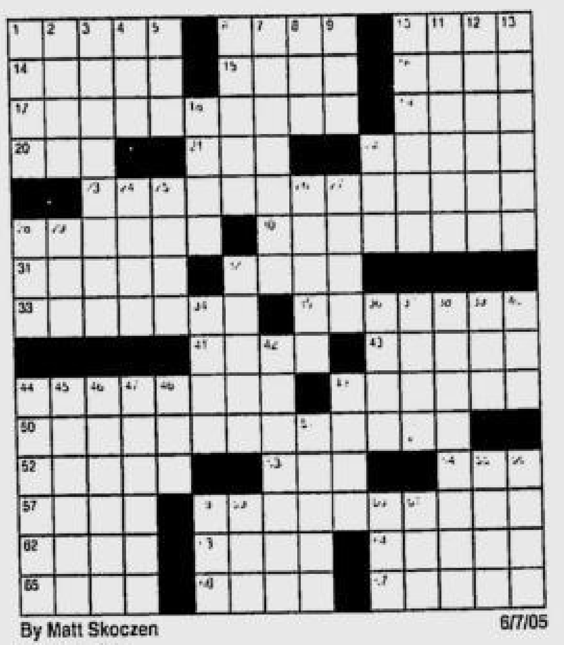
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Don't let anyone talk you into something you don't really believe in. Likewise, refrain from doing this to others. (People want to convince others today.)

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You can get a lot of work done today because you are relentless about accomplishing things. You're very determined and totally focused on one thing.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Parents must be patient with children today. Everybody is a bit obsessed right now. This includes children. Remind yourself that you are the adult; therefore you have to be more understanding.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): This is a good day for delving deep into secret matters. You might even discover secrets about yourself! Encounters with parents could be dicey; be extra diplomatic and patient today.

DAILY CROSSWORD


By Matt Skoczen
Reading, PA

6/7/05

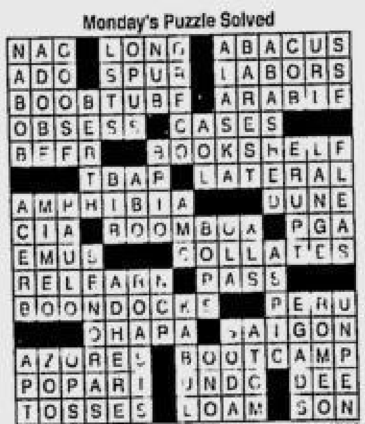
ACROSS

1 Joust weapon
6 Composer Stravinsky
10 __ monster
14 Bermuda, for one
15 Use a diapason
16 EPA's concern
17 No. 5 woman
19 Remainder
20 "Starpeace" artist Yoko
21 Urban RRs
22 Take down a peg
23 Urban fashion maven
28 Tolerates
30 Having no smell
31 Sal of Hollywood
32 & others
33 Afrikaner conflict
35 Despicable
41 "Fiesque" composer
43 Get up
44 Set apart for a special purpose
49 Durkheim and Zola
50 Designer of the rumpled silhouette
52 African succulents
53 CD-__
54 Coll. student's rating
57 Polynesian amulet
58 Fashionable NY-er
62 Beer formation
63 Clarinet relative
64 Lifeless
65 Movie terrier
66 Married woman
67 Levels

DOWN

1 Bonkers
2 Pretty soon
3 Addictive substance
4 Dove sound
5 Bus. letter abbr.
6 European peninsula
7 .45 report
8 Single entity
9 Theol. belief
10 Pet rodent
11 Glacial epoch
12 Setbacks
13 Modifies
18 Skirt edges
22 2nd-largest continent
24 __-Neisse line
25 Kindle call
26 Pocatello's state
27 "Damn Yankees" role
28 Emb. leader
29 Brief file?
32 Greek Muse
34 Jai __
36 Writer Janowitz
37 "__ Brockovich"
38 Twisted-wire ornamentation
39 Put into service
40 Guitarist Paul
42 Find out about
44 Writer Christie
45 "__ of the Field"
46 Inspect
47 Tater brand
48 Metric letters
49 Singer Calve
51 Blakley of "A Nightmare on Elm Street"
55 Henry VIII's last Catherine
56 Hill dwellers
58 Part of DJIA
59 Kimono sash
60 Frontier scout Carson
61 Tropical blackbird

Monday's Puzzle Solved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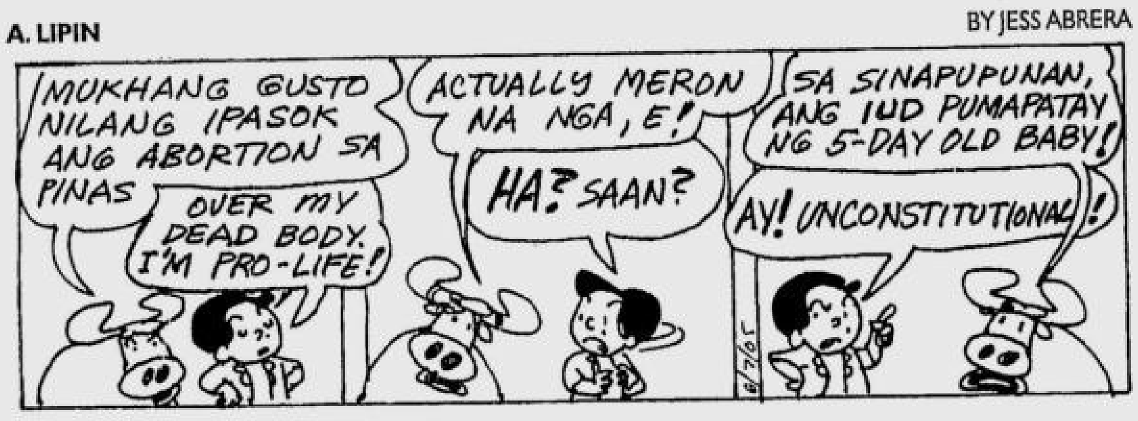
6/7/05

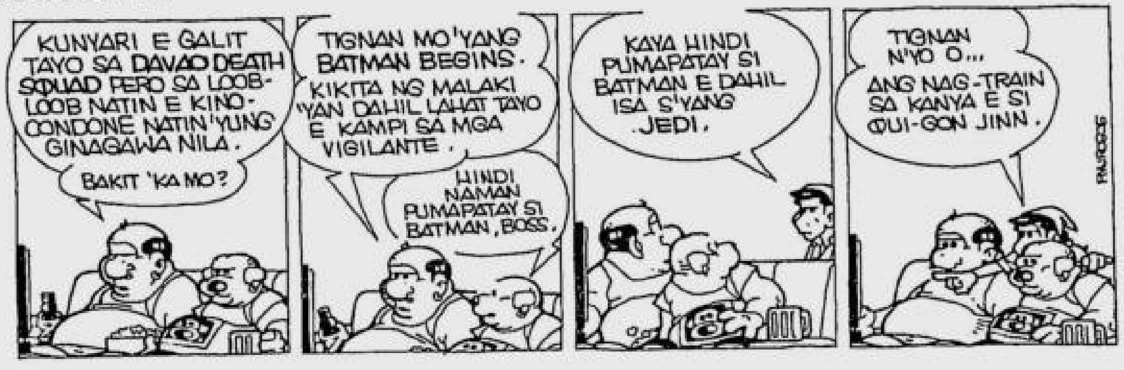
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


MUKHANG GUSTO NILANG IPASOK ANG ABORTION SA PINAS
OVER MY DEAD BODY. I'M PRO-LIFE!
ACTUALLY MERON NA NGA, E!
HA? SAAN?
SA SINAPUPUNAN, ANG IUD PUMAPATAY NG 5-DAY OLD BABY!
AY! UNCONSTITUTIONAL!

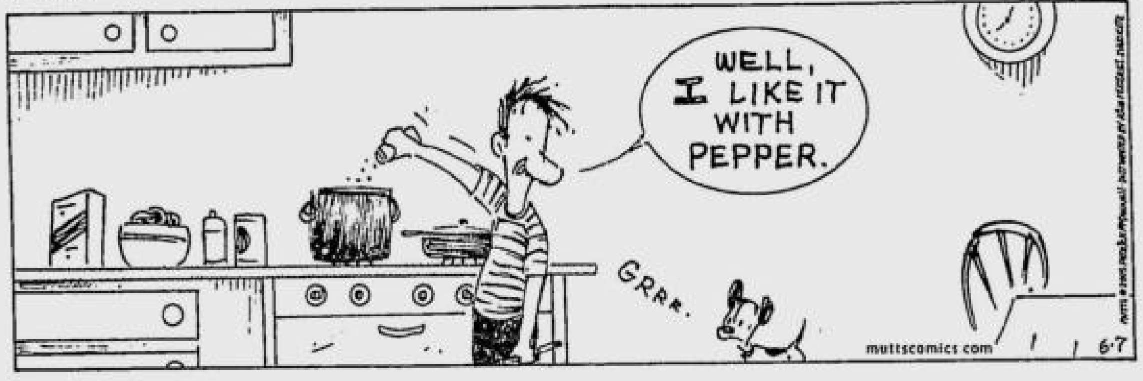
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


KUNYARI E GALIT TAYO SA DAVAO DEATH SQUAD PERO SA LOOB-LOOB NATIN E KINO-CONDONE NATIN 'YUNG GINAGAWA NILA.
BAKIT 'KA MO?
TIGNAN MO 'YANG BATMAN BEGINS. KIKITA NG MALAKI 'YAN DAHIL LAHAT TAYO E KAMPI SA MGA VIGILANTE.
HINDI NAMAN PUMAPATAY SI BATMAN, BOSS.
KAYA HINDI PUMAPATAY SI BATMAN E DAHIL ISA S'YANG JEDI.
TIGNAN N'YO O... ANG NAG-TRAIN SA KANYA E SI QUI-GON JINN.

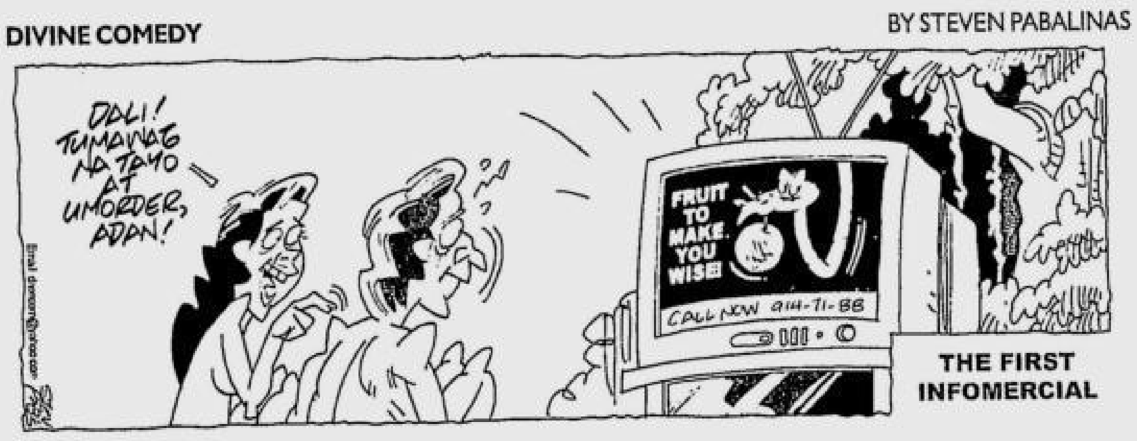
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


WELL, I LIKE IT WITH PEPPER.
GRRR.
muttscomics.com

DIVINE COMEDY

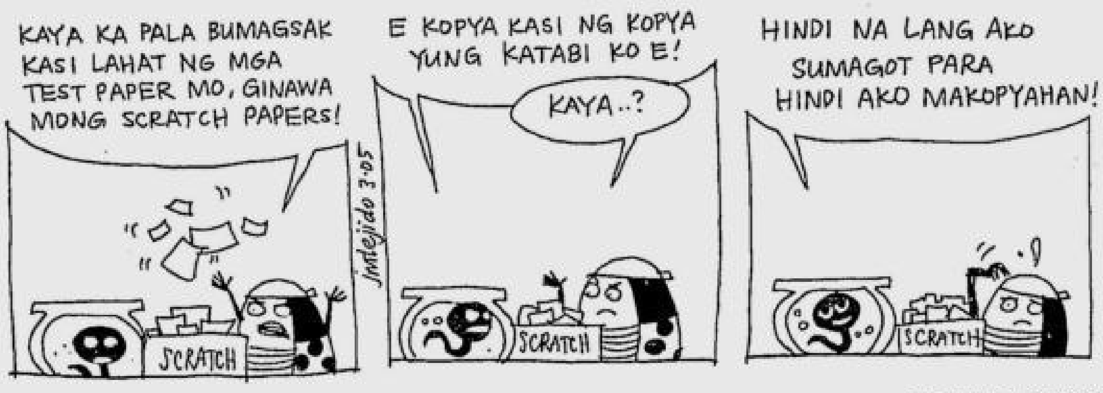
BY STEVEN PABALINAS


DALI! TUMAWAG NA TAYO AT UMORDER, ADAN!
FRUIT TO MAKE YOU WISE!
CALL NOW 911-71-88

THE FIRST INFOMERCIAL

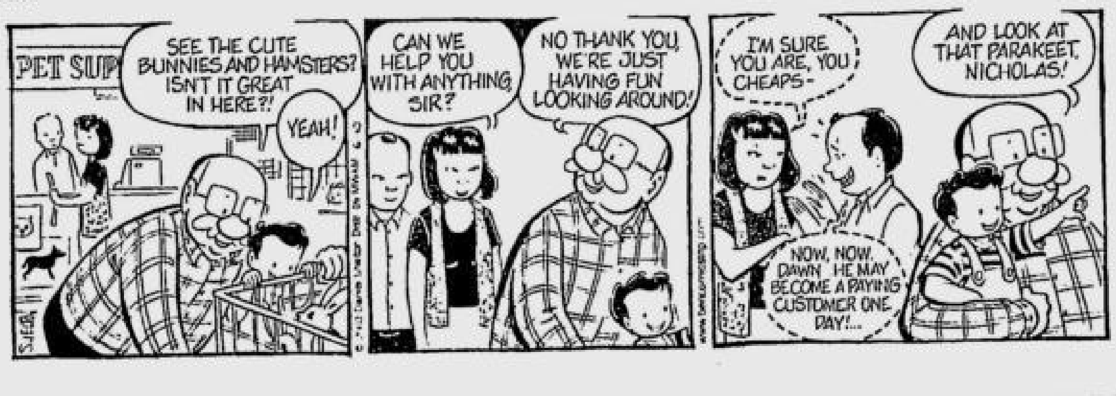
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


KAYA KA PALA BUMAGSAK KASI LAHAT NG MGA TEST PAPER MO, GINAWA MONG SCRATCH PAPERS!
SCRATCH
E KOPYA KASI NG KOPYA YUNG KATABI KO E!
KAYA..?
HINDI NA LANG AKO SUMAGOT PARA HINDI AKO MAKOPYAHAN!

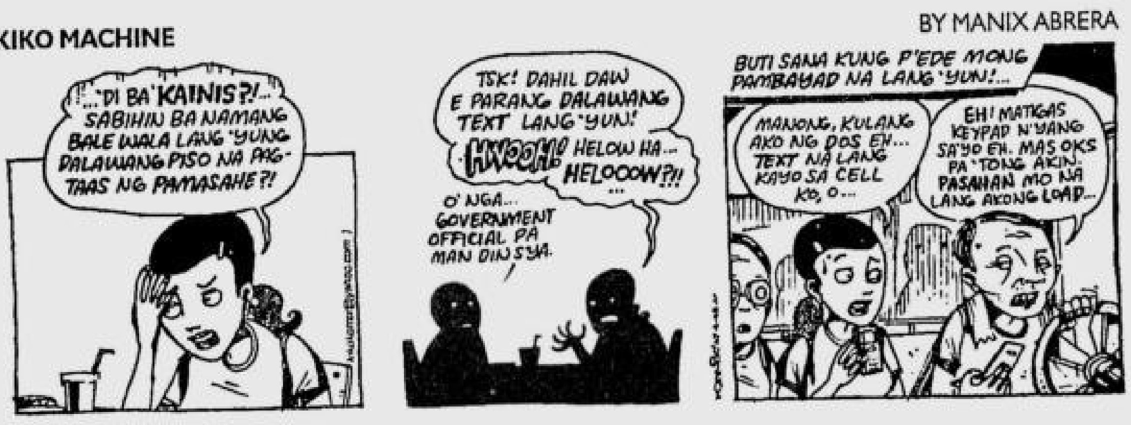
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


PET SUP
SEE THE CUTE BUNNIES AND HAMSTERS? ISN'T IT GREAT IN HERE?!
YEAH!
CAN WE HELP YOU WITH ANYTHING, SIR?
NO THANK YOU, WE'RE JUST HAVING FUN LOOKING AROUND!
I'M SURE YOU ARE, YOU CHEAPS-
NOW, NOW, DAWN. HE MAY BECOME A PAYING CUSTOMER ONE DAY!...
AND LOOK AT THAT PARAKEET, NICHOLAS!

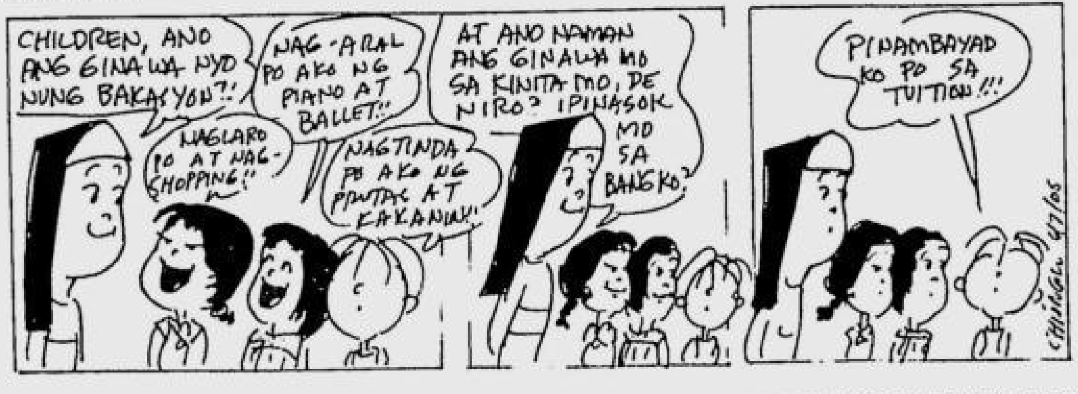
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


...'DI BA 'KAINIS?!... SABIHIN BA NAMANG BALE WALA LANG 'YUNG DALAWANG PISO NA PAGTAAS NG PAMASAHE?!
TSK! DAHIL DAW E PARANG DALAWANG TEXT LANG 'YUN!
HWOOH!! HELOW HA... HELOOOW?!! ...
O' NGA... GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL PA MAN DIN SYA.
BUTI SANA KUNG P'EDE MONG PAMBAYAD NA LANG 'YUN!...
MANONG, KULANG AKO NG DOS EH... TEXT NA LANG KAYO SA CELL KO, O...
EH! MATIGAS KEYPAD N'YANG SA'YO EH. MAS OKS PA 'TONG AKIN. PASAHAN MO NA LANG AKONG LOAD...

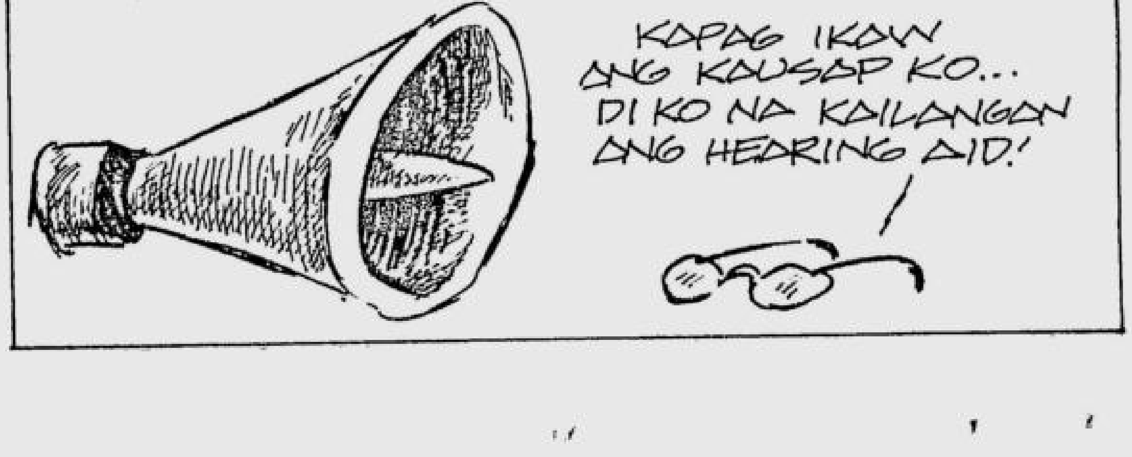
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


CHILDREN, ANO ANG GINAWA NYO NUNG BAKASYON?!
NAG-ARAL PO AKO NG PIANO AT BALLET!!
NAGLARO PO AT NAG-SHOPPING!!
NAGTINDA PO AKO NG PINTAS AT KAKANIN!
AT ANO NAMAN ANG GINAWA MO SA KINITA MO, DE NIRO? IPINASOK MO SA BANGKO?
PINAMBAYAD KO PO SA TUITION!!!
CHIONGLO 6/7/05

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


KAPAG IKAW ANG KAUSAP KO... DI KO NA KAILANGAN ANG HEARING AID!

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Assistant Editor **Corrie S. Narisma**

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Grime does not pay.

FOR CLEAN EMISSIONS.

PETRON

T-bill rates slide; 91-day yield at 5.691%

By Michelle V. Remo

HIGH market liquidity forced treasury bill rates to slide further across the board yesterday, with the benchmark 91-day yield dropping by 7.6 basis points to 5.691 percent.

"The market has spoken again, but it has spoken a little bit softer this time," National Treasurer Omar Cruz said in a briefing after yesterday's weekly auction.

Cruz explained that banks were still awash with cash and were continuing to react positively to developments in the government's fiscal position. But he also noted that the decline had started to become moderate compared with that of the previous auctions, as the rates could be reaching bottom.

Treasury bill rates have been declining for the past seven weekly auctions.

The 182-day treasury bill rate dropped by 3.3 basis points to 6.784 percent. The 364-day paper fetched 7.851 percent, or 8.3 basis points lower than the previous week's. (One percentage point is equivalent to 100 basis points.)

The high liquidity in the market was reflected by huge volume of bids. Tenders for the 91-day bills reached P6.66 billion, while the 182-day paper attracted P4.86 billion worth of bids. The 364-day securities got P5.67 billion worth of tenders. The volume of bids was much higher than the government's debt offering of only P2 billion for each maturity.

The Bureau of Treasury said it expected the positive response of the local market on government borrowings to be mirrored abroad.

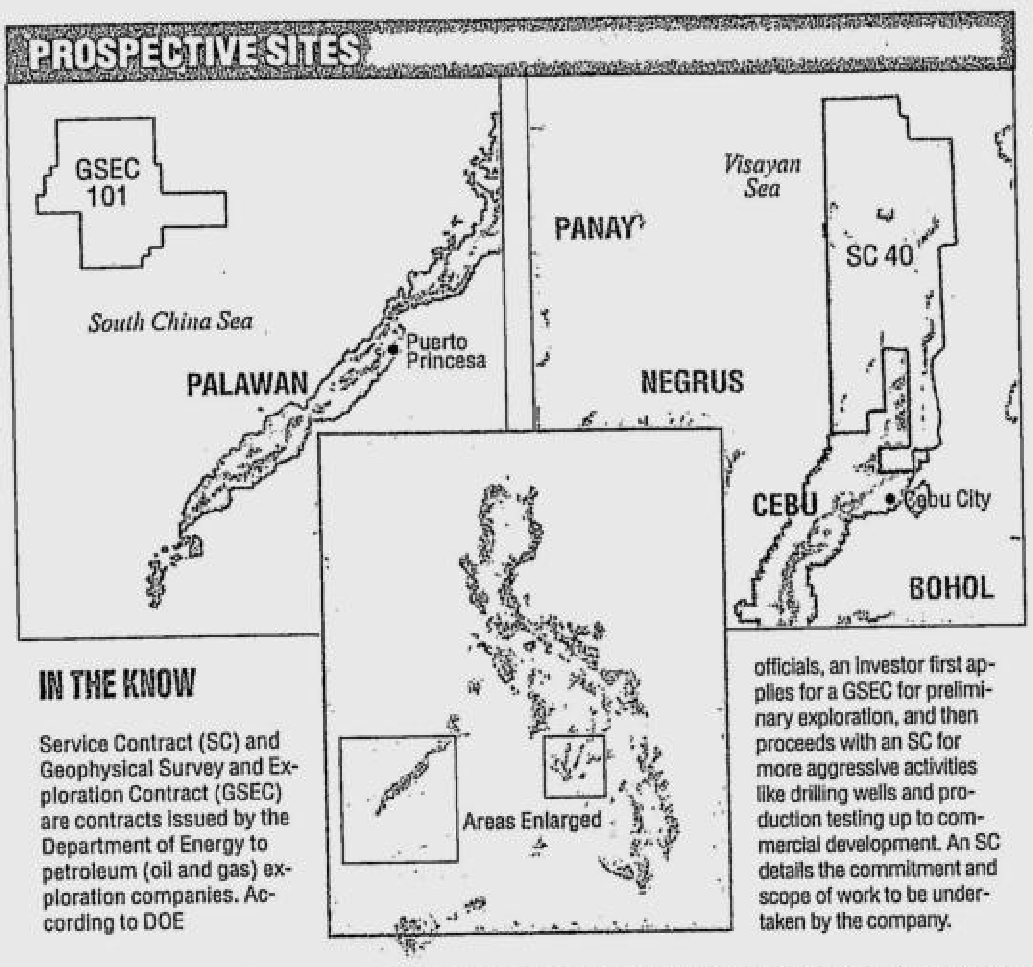
Cruz said economic officials were set to visit various cities in Europe and the United States starting June 21 for a no-deal road show, where they would update foreign investors on the developments in the Philippines' fiscal sector.

Cruz said the government could expect to have its foreign borrowing cost reduced once the investors have been briefed on the improving fiscal situation of the Philippines.

T-BILL/ B3

FOREIGN FIRMS RAISING $27M

Exploration projects in RP get boost



IN THE KNOW

Service Contract (SC) and Geophysical Survey and Exploration Contract (GSEC) are contracts issued by the Department of Energy to petroleum (oil and gas) exploration companies. According to DOE officials, an investor first applies for a GSEC for preliminary exploration, and then proceeds with an SC for more aggressive activities like drilling wells and production testing up to commercial development. An SC details the commitment and scope of work to be undertaken by the company.

By Abigail L. Ho

FORUM Energy Plc (FEP), the newly formed joint venture between Canada's Forum Energy Corp. and the United Kingdom's Sterling Energy Plc, is looking at raising another $27 million in additional funds to develop oil, gas and coal resources in the Philippines.

In a statement posted on the company's official website, Forum Energy Corp. president and chief executive Larry Youell said the new firm's planned listing with the Alternative Investment Market of the London Stock Exchange could raise about $27 million in additional funds.

The joint venture had already received prelisting commitments of some $6.2 million.

The recent approval of the joint venture by shareholders of Forum Energy Corp. effectively transferred the Canadian firm's 66.67-percent interest in Philippine company Forum Energy Inc. (FEI) to FEP.

FEI holds Service Contract 40, an oil and gas license covering onshore and offshore areas of Northern Cebu, as well as coal operating contracts in Central and Southern Cebu.

Sterling Energy's gas asset, Geophysical Survey and Exploration Contract (GSEC) 101 for oil and gas exploration over offshore Northwest Palawan in the South China Sea, was likewise transferred to the new company.

The license contains the Sampaguita gas find

FOREIGN/ B2

WHAT'S INSIDE

Gov't gets P2.5B in GFI dividends
/B2

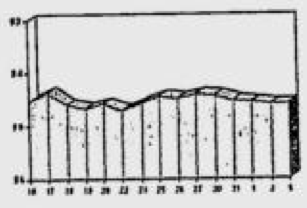
MR. BEARBULL

/B3

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

PESO-DOLLAR RATE



P 54.580 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., June 6, 2005

¥ 107.29 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., June 6, 2005

GOLD: $422.60-423.10

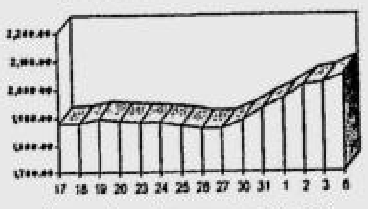
per ounce Hong Kong, June 3, 2005

June 6, 2005 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.817527796	1.000000	54.4960
Japan	Yen	0.007591	0.009285	0.5060
United Kingdom	Pound	1.482995	1.814000	98.8557
Hongkong	Dollar	0.105048	0.128495	7.0025
Switzerland	Franc	0.652769	0.798467	43.5133
Canada	Dollar	0.655543	0.801860	43.6982
Singapore	Dollar	0.489919	0.599269	32.6578
Australia	Dollar	0.617701	0.755572	41.1757
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.168566	2.652590	144.5555
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.218008	0.266667	14.5323
Brunei	Dollar	0.488456	0.597479	32.5602
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000085	0.000104	0.0057
Thailand	Baht	0.020101	0.024588	1.3399
UAE	Dirham	0.222596	0.272279	14.8381
Euro	Euro	1	1.223200	66.6595
Argentina	Peso	0.283371	0.346620	18.8894
Brazil	REAL	0.338507	0.414062	22.5647
Denmark	Kroner	0.134391	0.164387	8.9584
India	Rupee	0.018768	0.022957	1.2511
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.215168	0.263193	14.3430
Mexico	New Peso	0.075379	0.092204	5.0247
New Zealand	Dollar	0.571857	0.699496	38.1197
Norway	Kroner	0.126668	0.154940	8.4436
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013717	0.016779	0.9144
South Africa	Rand	0.11926	0.145879	7.9498
Korea	Won	0.000811	0.000992	0.0541
Sweden	Kroner	0.109342	0.133747	7.2887
Syria	Pound	0.015749	0.019264	1.0498
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.026186	0.032031	1.7456
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000381	0.000466	0.0254

STOCK MARKET

Shares extend gains, hit 2-month high

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

stubborn SHARE prices rose 1.41 percent yesterday, extending gains to hit a fresh two-month high as investors chased select blue chips for a seventh straight session, dealers said.

They said an improved fiscal and economic outlook following the passage of new tax measures and easing political concerns have boosted sentiment, with investors believing share prices can still rise further.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index added 28.55 points to 2,051.04, the day's high. It hit a low of 2,017.37. This was the best finish since March 17, when the market closed ended at 2,100.11.

Turnover was 998 million shares worth P1.9 billion. The broader all-shares index rose 15.94 points to 1,234.47. Gainers beat losers 62 to 20, with 41 stocks unchanged.

Investors are now focused on the Philippines' improving fiscal fundamentals, largely anchored on the passage of new tax measures aimed at addressing the country's chronic budget deficit, said Astro del Castillo of First Grade Holdings.

Last month, Fitch Ratings upgraded its sovereign outlook on the country's credit ratings to stable from negative, lauding the government's efforts at fiscal reform.

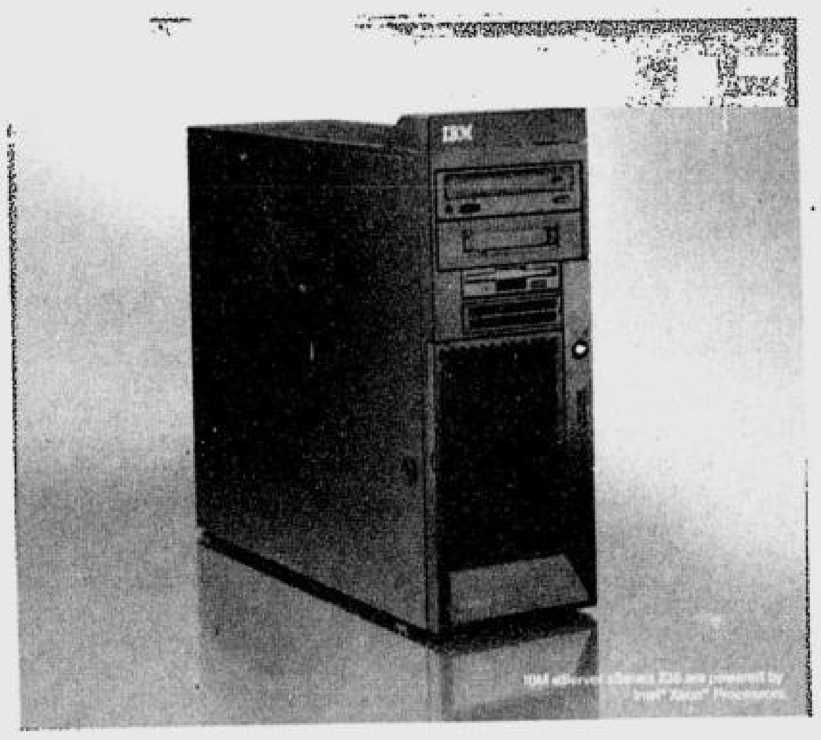
However, "we're seeing some consolidation and some hints of profit-taking," Del Castillo added.

After having broken the 2,050 level, dealers said the market's next resistance is at 2,080 points.

Top-traded Philippine Long Distance Telephone rose P60 to a record P1,645. Unit Pilipino Telephone rose 15 centavos to P3.55 while rival Globe Telecom fell P10 to P890.

AFP

IBM



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Gov't gets ₱2.5B in GFI dividends

By Michelle V. Remo

THE NATIONAL government has already collected P2.5 billion worth of dividends from government-owned and -controlled corporations (GOCCs) and government financial institutions (GFIs) this year, boosting its effort to raise more revenues and improve its fiscal standing.

The Department of Finance said that the P2.5 billion in dividends, remitted by the GOCCs as of the first week of June, were from the 2004 income of the state-owned firms.

The DOF said the dividends that flowed in kept the agency on track of its GOCC collection target of P4 billion this year.

Nieves Osorio, DOF undersecretary in charge of monitoring the finances of GOCCs, said during a briefing that the state-owned firms are required to remit 50 percent of their income to the national government.

She reported that the Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP) accounted for the biggest amount of remittance at P1.135 billion. Of the amount, about half, or P585 million, represented the bank's advanced remittance for the second semester of the year.

Other GOCCs and GFIs that remitted dividends were: Philippine Ports Authority (PPA), with P500 million; Philippine National Oil Co. (PNOC), P306 million; Land Bank of the Philippines, P300 million;

Philippine Economic Zone Authority, P94 million; Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp., P51 million; Philippine Leisure and Retirement Authority, P41 million; Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System, P41 million, and Cebu Ports Authority, P34 million.

Osorio said the government would not have a hard time meeting its P4-billion collection target for dividends, as the P2.5 billion remitted by state-owned firms as of June accounted for more than 50 percent of the goal.

The P4-billion target, however, was lower than the P4.9 billion in dividends collected last year for the GOCCs' 2003 income. The lower target was partly attributed to the request of some GOCCs with negative retained earnings to be exempted from remitting dividends this year.

Osorio said that under the law, the government could exempt a GOCC or GFI from remitting dividends if it has negative retained earnings.

The finance official also reported that the national government has collected P763 million in guarantee fees from state-owned firms during the January-to-April period this year. She said the government was aiming to collect P3 billion in guarantee fees this year.

Guarantee fees are charged by the national government every time it advances cash to a GOCC or GFI that cannot, for the moment, meet its maturing obligations.

Tech firm acquires Laguna land, equipment

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

ELECTRONICS firm Ionics Inc. has acquired two parcels of land and manufacturing equipment via two of its subsidiaries, in an export zone in Laguna province.

This will be the fifth operating plant Ionics will own in the Philippines. Ionics also has an electronics plant in China.

Manuel R. Roxas, Ionics corporate secretary, said in a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) that the company's wholly owned subsidiary, Ionics Properties Inc. (IPI), has acquired the leasehold and land rights over two parcels of land and a factory building in Carmelray II, an export zone in Calamba City, Laguna.

Ionics EMS Inc., a 75-percent owned subsidiary listed in Singapore, will acquire the manufacturing equipment in the building.

Roxas said in a telephone interview that the land was acquired from Three-Five Systems Pacific Inc., a subsidiary of an American company that used to manufacture electronic products.

Roxas declined to give the cost of acquiring the property.

Ionics plans to avail of tax incentives that are offered to operators in an export zone which may include a lower tax of 5 percent on gross income.

Goad governance

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

SUPPOSEDLY, the publicly listed Equitable PCI Bank has four—again, that's FOUR—"independent" directors in its 15-man board. Supposedly.

As members of the SSS and the GSIS, we happen to be the biggest stockholders of the bank. And that's why we need those "independent" directors there.

In 1999, you see, the two institutions that manage our retirement funds, plus burial and health insurance funds, poured some P16 billion of our money into the bank.

That was roughly six years ago. Today, we may expect to show a lot for our investments. Well, okay, basically, a lot of nothing!

Based on reports—not to mention all those, well, "unkind" whispers in banking about our money in the bank—those "independent" directors are actually as independent as the Pinoy is from the cellular phone "text" message, or the sweet young thing from her "sugar daddy," or athlete's foot from the toes of the athlete, or the toilet bowl from the water tank, or...

I'm sure you get my drift.

* * *

WHILE, in the corporate scene, "good governance" seems to be the byword, none of those four "indy" directors in our bank seem to care about such a worldwide trend.

Those "indies," according to one of the SSS representatives to the board, have been voting—without fail and also without shame—for the benefit of the Go family.

Whether those "indies" get a lot of goading from the Go family, is quite an open secret in banking, possibly thanks to the government guys in the board.

The Go family now owns only 25 percent of the merged Equitable PCI Bank, as against the SSS-GSIS combined holdings of 46 percent.

The government side is furious that the Go family controls the bank, only because they are actually using some 10 percent of the voting stocks that they do not own.

The stocks belong to the bank, paid for by the bank using the money of depositors and other stockholders, because the Go family did not have enough money to pay for the shares.

And so for some time now, the GSIS and the SSS tried and tried to stop the Go family from controlling the bank through those shares.

But the government side has always found those idio..., *este*, "indies" in the board to be siding with the Go family. They are that "independent!"

* * *

ONE of the four is the bank president, Rene Buenaventura, representing the management.

In the past, Buenaventura abstained from voting in the board, precisely because the issues were between stockholders, which did not really involve management.

That, according to my sources, has changed.

One example was the move of the Go family to change the by-laws, which allowed them to TKO the government side in putting its representatives to the board.

Buenaventura voted "for" the Go family move. What's more, the three other "indies" followed his example.

As if by a weird coincidence, the three other "indies" have all been connected with the Department of Foreign Affairs at one time or another.

They are former DFA Secretary Roberto Romulo, former ambassador to the Court of St. James Cesar Bautista, and the former head of Meco in Taiwan, Antonio Basilio.

In fact, according to a director, when Basilio was "elected" to the board last year, Bautista was instrumental in following the script of the Go family. Very independent!

* * *

ACCORDING to former DENR Secretary Fulgencio Factoran Jr., who sits in the board, the four "indies" voted against the government measures that could have stopped the Go family from using dirty tactics to keep control of the bank.

Together with an American citizen, who gets expat pay out of our investments in the bank just for sitting in the board, the four "indies" thus are giving the Go family complete control of the bank.

Like a loyal attack dog, for instance, at least based on Factoran's written account, one of the four "indies," Bob Romulo, even "parroted" the line of the Go family on the matter.

Now, Romulo is known in business as having formed a number of foundations. Working for one of them, according to our source, is one of the kids of Gloriaetta.

One of the "attack dogs," as a matter of fact, even calls on the cellular phone during board meetings, supposedly to reach someone in Malacañang.

To the government directors, who should take care of our P16-billion investment, such a body language was meant to give the impression that he was ... well, "*malakas*."

Believe me, nobody is "malakas" with Gloriaetta. Not even her close friends! She just fired one from the Philippine Coconut Authority. Or at least she gave her blessing.

You mean, not even her poor controversial husband, boss? Look, she has been overheard on the radio shouting at the guy.

And that somebody in the Equitable PCI board is trying to project an air of "malakas?" Wow! Gloriaetta should know this is about our pension funds. I mean, this is really all about our money.

* * *

TO PUMP up the spirit in business, apparently as a counter to surveys showing her sagging rating, Gloriaetta is going on an investment promo tour of Asia.

I think that the business sector really likes such a trip more than all the photo-op out-of-town trips she has been busy with lately.

Despite the bad news on her rating, we are gaining a little momentum in the economy. Investors are still interested in this country.

For instance, a group cannot wait to invest some $1.2 billion in the railway and highway system, under the MRT-7 project.

The group is known as the Universal LRT Corp., or ULC, and they are already at the final stage of the long (very, very long?) process of getting government approval.

Word is out that the Neda is going to the next—and final—stage of the Swiss challenge.

Now that has nothing to do with secret bank accounts or chocolates or wristwatches. In the "Swiss challenge," you have to beat the offer of ULC to the government to steal the railway-highway project from ULC.

But nobody really knows if the practice came from Switzerland.

* * *

ANYWAY, such is the news that can boost confidence in business. Gloriaetta has declared that, from now on, she would pay attention to infrastructure. This is always good for the economy.

That railway project, for instance, runs from North Avenue in Quezon City, all the way to San Jose del Monte in Bulacan. Then, a 40-kilometer highway links the railway to the North Expressway at Marilao.

That's like opening up thousands of hectares of idle raw land to development. And it is the beauty of infrastructure. Roads and airports and piers and railways always have this ability to generate a lot of other businesses.

From what I gathered, the ULC project itself has a real estate component, worth about $500 million, to develop San Jose del Monte into a new urban center.

And all that, mind you, without any cost to the government!

* * *

LIKE other railway ventures abroad, this one by ULC is actually a real estate play, more than a transport venture.

You see, railways hardly make money anywhere in the world. The proponents just make up for the loss in the railway venture, by linking it to property development.

Real estate development is the biggest reason behind ULC's position that MRT-7 can run without any subsidy from the government.

Whether or not the railway business goes well, the ULC has the real estate venture to rely on for the revenues to pay off the entire project.

And here is the good news to the guys down here in my barangay: the MRT-7 railway-highway project will absorb a lot of traffic from Edsa.

There ... no more ugly pink wire fences!

Sugar output seen to rise in '06-'07

By Christine A. Gaylican

SUGAR production will likely increase in the 2006-2007 crop year, reversing the downward trend of previous years, according to the Sugar Regulatory Authority.

The increase in sugar prices since the start of the year may prompt producers to return to cane farming, said James Ledesma, SRA administrator.

The current average mill gate price is around P850 for every 50-kilogram bag.

"I believe the regime of strong prices will continue, and that usually brings about a rebound in production," Ledesma said in an interview. "Despite the high cost of fertilizers, proper cultivation approaches will [be revived] and we will achieve a recovery in production."

Also, any excess in sugar production during the 2006-2007 crop year will not likely put pressure on prices, Ledesma told the INQUIRER.

"By [2006-2007], we're anticipating that several ethanol plants may already be in operation," he said. "Any excess will be absorbed by the ethanol plants, so production increases ... will be more sustainable."

Ethanol, or ethyl alcohol, is a gasoline additive derived from agricultural feedstock such as sugar, corn, sorghum and cassava.

In an attempt to ease the impact of rising prices of petroleum products in the world market, the Philippines is expected to approve a bill this year that will require oil companies to use ethanol as a fuel blend.

Once the bill has been approved, oil companies will have to sell gasoline blended with 5 percent ethanol.

The share of ethanol in the blend will increase to 10 percent by 2010.

Resistance to the use of ethanol as a fuel blend has died down due to the rising cost of petroleum products, Ledesma noted.

"I'm convinced that ethanol's time has come," Ledesma said. "[High] oil prices in the world market have pushed the pricing mechanism for ethanol to a point where consumers will be saving money if they use gasoline blended with ethanol."

According to the latest studies, the price of gasoline with a 5-percent blend of ethanol may sell at around P28 per liter, while unmixed gasoline may go for P30-P32 a liter.

"The more ethanol you put in, the cheaper your fuel will become, which means we have a good chance in pushing the ethanol program," Ledesma said.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of June 6, 2005)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	4	4	4	4	5,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	32.5	34	32.5	33.5	997,900
Bank of the Phil. Islands	50	51	49.5	51	2,381,600
China Banking Corp.	770	780	760	780	1,450
Citystate Savings Bank	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	200
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.65	0.65	0.64	0.65	1,680,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	51	51.5	51	51.5	541,400
International Exch. Bank	19	19	18.75	18.75	50,100
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	31	32.5	31	32	1,092,300
Philippine National Bank	34	34	34	34	43,200
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	11	11	11	11	300
Union Bank of the Phil.	28	28.5	28	28.5	109,500
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Manulife Financial Corp.	2460	2460	2460	2460	320
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.04	1.04	1.02	1.02	100,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1700	1750	1700	1750	1,610
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	12	12	11.75	11.75	101,100
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.12	1.18	1.12	1.18	9,600,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	900	900	890	880	146,360
Ipeople Inc.	3.45	3.5	3.45	3.45	121,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.0525	0.0525	0.05	0.0525	4,600,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.23	0.23	0.21	0.21	90,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.3	3.6	3.3	3.55	11,840,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1585	1645	1585	1645	394,570
Ivantage Corp.	0.67	0.69	0.67	0.69	140,000
Philweb Corp.	0.018	0.018	0.018	0.018	41,500,000
POWER, ENERGY & OTHER UTILITIES					
Manila Electric Co. A	17	17	17	17	41,500
Manila Electric Co. B	24.75	26	24.75	25.5	1,343,800
Manila Water Co. Inc.	6.7	6.9	6.7	6.9	11,578,000
Petron Corp.	3.35	3.45	3.35	3.45	7,716,000
Salcon Power Corp.	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	103,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.18	1.18	1.18	1.18	20,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	101,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	8.1	8.3	8.1	8.3	513,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.67	0.67	0.67	0.67	300,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.6	0.67	0.6	0.67	6,190,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	3.75	3.9	3.75	3.85	1,965,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	32.5	32.5	32.5	32.5	1,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	29.5	31	29	31	324,400
Pancake House Inc.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	50,000
San Miguel Corp. A	59	59.5	58.5	59.5	101,800
San Miguel Corp. B	90.5	93.5	90.5	93.5	153,200
Universal Robina Corp.	14	14.5	14	14.5	68,300
Vitarich Corp.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	100,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.0085	0.009	0.0085	0.009	62,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.0095	0.0095	0.0095	0.0095	10,000,000
Ayala Corp.	375	377.5	367.5	370	99,670
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	450,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	5.1	5.2	5.1	5.2	755,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.033	0.035	0.033	0.035	16,000,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2.12	2.14	2.12	2.14	333,000
APC Group Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.32	0.33	340,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	36,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	30,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	12	12	12	12	5,100
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.06	1.14	1.06	1.12	44,336,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.17	0.17	300,000
CADP Group Corp.	1	1	1	1	30,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.215	0.225	0.215	0.22	600,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.31	0.33	0.31	0.32	10,790,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	2.8	3.05	2.8	2.95	3,721,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.038	0.038	0.038	0.038	700,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	8.9	9.3	8.9	9.2	1,315,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	51	53.5	51	53.5	1,169,000
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	200,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.095	0.0975	0.0925	0.095	4,600,000
House Of Investments Inc.	1.22	1.22	1.22	1.22	100,000
Ionics Inc.	1.24	1.24	1.22	1.22	140,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	3.45	3.55	3.45	3.55	454,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.96	2	1.94	2	241,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.48	1.54	1.48	1.54	6,155,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.43	0.43	0.43	0.43	10,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.37	0.4	0.37	0.4	34,260,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	90,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.99	0.99	0.99	0.99	20,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.52	0.52	0.52	0.52	50,000
SM Investments Corp.	252.5	255	252.5	255	301,910
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.2	0.205	0.19	0.2	7,750,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Active Alliance Inc.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	10,000
Music Semiconductors Corp	1.22	1.22	1.22	1.22	1,000
Picop Resources Inc	0.0975	0.1	0.0975	0.1	800,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	1.26	1.32	1.22	1.3	11,767,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.81	0.87	0.81	0.87	1,510,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.32	1.36	1.3	1.3	1,705,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (PDR)	11.5	11.75	11.5	11.75	363,700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,700
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,200
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	2,600
PLDT 10% Pref Series Cc	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	8.4	8.6	8.4	8.5	4,325,000
Cityland Development Corp.	1.52	1.58	1.52	1.58	3,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	1	1	0.99	1	200,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.29	0.31	0.29	0.3	11,040,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.215	0.235	0.21	0.235	3,160,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.39	0.42	0.39	0.42	14,510,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.6	1.6	1.56	1.56	12,685,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	2.28	2.28	2.28	2.28	20,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	400,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	20,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	100,000
SM Development Corp.	1.52	1.54	1.52	1.54	54,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.9	8.1	7.8	8	10,206,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.8	0.84	0.8	0.84	130,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	0.8	0.85	0.8	0.85	70,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0075	0.008	0.007	0.0075	124,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	4.7	5.2	4.7	5.1	812,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.32	0.32	0.31	0.31	3,710,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.35	0.35	0.34	0.34	3,740,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.015	0.015	0.015	0.015	40,600,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	56,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0065	0.007	0.0065	0.0065	192,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.92	0.95	0.92	0.95	400,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	1.06	1.1	1.06	1.08	2,915,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	33	35.5	33	34.5	904,800
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	470,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.006	0.0065	0.006	0.006	81,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	55,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	200,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	2.32	2.42	2.32	2.42	73,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.16	0.17	0.16	0.17	8,560,000

DISCLOSURES

ACESITE (Phils.) Hotel Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on July 19, 4 p.m. at the Coral Ballroom B of the Manila Pavilion Hotel, UN Ave. corner Maria Orosa St., Ermita, Manila. Stockholders of record as of June 30 are entitled to vote at the meeting.

***

LMG Chemicals Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on July 7, 2 p.m. at the 7/F Board Rm., Chemphil Bldg., 851 Arnaiz Ave., Legaspi Vill., Makati City. Only stockholders of record as of July 7 are entitled to vote at the meeting.

***

ELECTED directors of **Salcon Power Corp.** were Wong Fong Fui, Dennis T. Villareal, Alfredo L. Henares, Lim Chan Lok, Alberto P. Fenix Jr., Chang Ching Chau, Tong Weng Leong, Yeo Ker Kuang, Shyh-Chyi Hsiao, Roberto F. de Ocampo and Augusto W. Go

***

ELECTED directors of **Sinophil Corp.** were Alfredo B. Benitez, Ricardo Leong, Caesar J. Poblador, Jose T. Gabionza, Willy N. Ocier, A. Bayani K. Tan and Edmundo L. Tan.

***

ELECTED directors of **Belle Corp.** were Rogelio B. Cabuñag, Benito Tan Guat, Gregorio U. Kilayko, Willy N. Ocier, Henry T. Sy, Jr., Thelmo Y. Cunanan, Antonio A. Henson, Jacinto C. Ng Jr., Hans T. Sy, Washington Z. Sycip and Cesar E.A. Virata. ***Compiled by Erika A. Sarmiento, PDI Research***

Foreign firms raising ...

From page B1

which, according to a recent assessment by PGS Reservoir Consultants (UK) Ltd., has potential gas reserves of some 2.3 trillion cubic feet.

The seven prospects and three discoveries now within FEP's licenses have total potential "unrisked" reserves of about 900 million barrels of oil and 5,500 billion cubic feet (BCF) of gas.

On a "risked" basis, potential reserves from the three discoveries amount to 2,330 BCF of gas, while those from prospects within the licenses total 93 million barrels of oil and 320 BCF of gas. Proven and probable coal reserves are placed at 4.9 million tons.

"This transaction will deliver accelerated growth and value to both the company and our shareholders. Not only will the FEI assets receive fast-track development as a result of the considerable investment from London-based institutional investors, but the company will also additionally benefit from exposure to the potentially world-class GSEC 101 asset," Youell said.

"FEP has already received commitments for approximately $6.2 million and an aggressive work program in the Philippines is underway commencing with a seismic survey of the Central Tanon prospect offshore SC 40," he added.

Foreign funds return in force

MR. BEARBULL

Ron Nathan

AT THE PRESENT time, there are accusations and denials taking place in the Senate regarding jueteng. This is very disruptive and will get us nowhere because anyone accused can refuse to answer, claiming the right of privacy. A precedent has been established and another President ousted. What is needed is a solution that will please everybody and at the same time provide the government with sufficient funds to pay down the debt and reduce the deficit. Before giving you my ingenious solution, I will look at the whole spectrum of gambling.

We do not have jueteng in England so I am not familiar with it but my wife told me that her grandfather, now 100 years old, used to bet 5 centavos about 40 years ago. If the Senate finds it to be illegal, I will not hesitate to turn him over to the Supreme Court and let him face the consequences.

Thanks to an article on various gambling games, which appeared in the Sunday edition, I now know that it is choosing 2 numbers from 37. Two digits is the same but refers to the legal state lottery, which is just a load of balls. And another game masiao is based on the jai alai results. Lotto is perfectly legal and every Sunday, I see a lotto people playing it in the Megamall. In England, there are about 50,000 outlets, but in the Philippines, with a larger population, there are only 2,000. The reason is obvious. It competes with jueteng thereby depriving bagmen, mayors, policemen and even suspected lawmen of their cut.

What is the logic of some numbers games being legal while others, also based on chance, are illegal. The Senate should decide one way or the other.

My solution is to replace all other games of chance with my own game called FATSO. This requires all members of the Senate and Congress to have their cholesterol readings checked three times a year. As this involves the taking of blood, hemophiliacs and Jehovah's Witnesses would be exempted. The HDL/LDL readings would be fed into a computer and we could even try glycerides.

The government would set up 86,000 outlets all over the country, 1 for every 1000 people. Bets from P1 upward could be made daily and at 9 p.m., the computer would randomly select a member of either House and display his good and bad cholesterol readings anonymously.

Ten percent of the funds would cover the cost of running these additional outlets and another 10 percent would be given to the legislators to compensate them for the blood tests and their loss of pork. They could redistribute this down the line so that all previous participants are still included.

Lastly, 20 percent will go straight to the government. If the amount spent on gambling is accurate, the government should be able to reduce the deficit to zero by Christmas. This leaves 60 percent to pay out, which is much higher than the 41 percent paid at present. So everybody wins.

Our bonds will be upgraded to triple A and the PHISIX will overtake the DOW. Long after BEARBULL is forgotten, FATSO will be played worldwide.

* * *

ABOUT three months ago, when the PHISIX was 2,183, my degree of risk indicator gave a strong SELL signal. Next day, the index peaked and over the next five weeks, it fell 300 points. The fast indicator gave a BUY about a month ago but not the slow indicator. The market rose but on low volume, and without any foreign participation, so I wrote that I was not impressed by the rally. It soon fizzled out and if anyone had followed it together with the SELL signal, they would have just about broken even.

The same thing happened on May 30 when BDO, the only stock added to the MSCI Philippine Index, rose sharply as foreign mutual funds rushed in to buy the stock before the index became official on May 31. They had to align their portfolios to the index so if they did not already possess BDO, they had to include it. Foreign buying rose sharply, but I ignored it, as there was a fundamentally sound reason for the sudden increase in activity.

The next day, AC had a 1-for-50 reverse stock split. This reduced the number of shares by 98 percent, but increase the price by a factor of 50, leaving the value unchanged. The reason behind this unusual maneuver was to increase the price in U.S. currency from 13 cents (a penny stock) to a more respectable $7. This invoked a favorable response and foreign funds invested P110 million into the stock for two days in succession. They were buying again last Friday so the stock jumped 10 percent last week. ALI will probably follow suit.

Last week, turnover surged as foreign funds invested P300 million every day, except Thursday when they put in P550 million. Since it is they who control our market, the tiniest in Asia, the PHISIX rose steadily. Today, they invested another P326 million and the index rose 28 points to 2,051.

The indicator is so overbought that I hope for a modest correction this week but this depends on the pace of foreign investment, which I cannot predict. Foreign perception of the Philippines seems to have taken a turn for the better while local investors think otherwise, as indicated by the President having the lowest rating ever accorded to a leader.

Remember that for every buyer, there has to be a seller. So, if foreign investors bought a net P300 million, it means that local investors sold P300 million, admittedly at rising prices. If foreign investment falters even for a few days, the market will correct but there is no sign of that at present.

We have had our debt rating outlook upgraded by FITCH from negative to stable. Credit Lyonnais commented favorably on the market and predicted that it would test 2,000, which it has. Deutsche Bank (REGIS) believes that with additional revenue coming in next January from the 12-percent VAT, the Philippine market will rise to higher levels by next year. UBS thinks that we are over the hump. They probably smoke Camels.

Since these brokers control where the PHISIX is heading, it looks right to BUY into the market on even a slight correction. Which shares should you buy? Forget about P/E ratios because the stocks that will lead the market are those with the largest growth potential. I will mention them in my newsletter at an appropriate time.

Lastly, it is time to amend our trading strategy. Until now, I have followed the risk indicator, advising subscribes to be either 100 percent in the market or 100 percent out. This has worked extremely well but if we anticipate a bull market, we have to adopt a different strategy. Since I have run out of space, I will continue this topic next week.

mrbearbull@hotmail.com

T-bill rates slide . . .

From page B1

He said the road show would take government economic officials to the European cities of Frankfurt, Geneva and Zurich, and then to Boston, New York and Los Angeles in the United States.

Lead arrangers of the road show include UBS, Goldman Sachs, Citigroup, Deutsche Bank and ABN-Amro.

Cruz said the economic officials would basically brief foreign investors on the passage of various fiscal reform measures such as the value-added tax bill, and administrative efforts to reduce the government's budget deficit.

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Philweb inks deal with gaming firm

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

PUBLICLY listed gaming firm PhilWeb Corp. (Philweb) yesterday said it had signed an agreement with a unit of Futurebet Gaming Systems of Canada to be its partner in providing technology, marketing and distribution services for all sports-betting formats of state gaming regulator Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor).

Philweb corporate information officer Josephine Manalo said the memorandum of agreement signed by Philweb with FB Systems Inc. last June 3 covered all North American sports, including basketball, football, baseball leagues, Philippine-based sports and all other sports excluding soccer as well as other events that may be approved by Pagcor through various gaming mediums and gaming venues.

Futurebet Systems is one of the world's biggest developers and operators of Internet gaming applications.

Manalo said the partnership would allow Philweb to continue fulfilling its commitment to Pagcor to develop the sports gaming industry as well as firmly entrench itself in the Philippine gaming market.

In July last year, Pagcor decided to offer casino games through Internet casino stations.

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NOTICE OF ANNUAL
STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the 2005 Annual Stockholders' Meeting of EEI CORPORATION will be held on June 17, 2005, at 10:00 A.M. at RCBC Plaza, Ayala Avenue cor. Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City, Metro Manila, to consider and act upon the following matters

1. Certification of Sending of Notices and Quorum.
2. Approval of the Minutes of the Annual Stockholders' Meeting held on June 18, 2004.
3. Chairman's Report/Review of Operations.
   a. 2004 Highlights
   b. Outlook for 2005
4. Approval of the Annual Report and Ratification of the Actions of the Board of Directors/Officers

Election of Directors.

Appointment of External Auditor

Amendment of the Sixth Article of the Articles of Incorporation increasing the number of Directors from 9 to 11.

8 Transaction of other business which may come before the meeting.

9 Adjournment.

The Board of Directors has fixed the close of business on March 31, 2005 as the record date for the purpose of determining the Company's stockholders entitled to notice of, and to vote at, the said meeting.

Stockholders who cannot attend the meeting but would like to be represented thereat, should accomplish the proxy form which have been mailed to them together with the Agenda, Information Statement, and Annual Report, and return the same to the Office of the Corporate Secretary not later than 24 hours before the meeting.

FERDINAND G. VILLAFUERTE
Senior Vice President & Corporate Secretary

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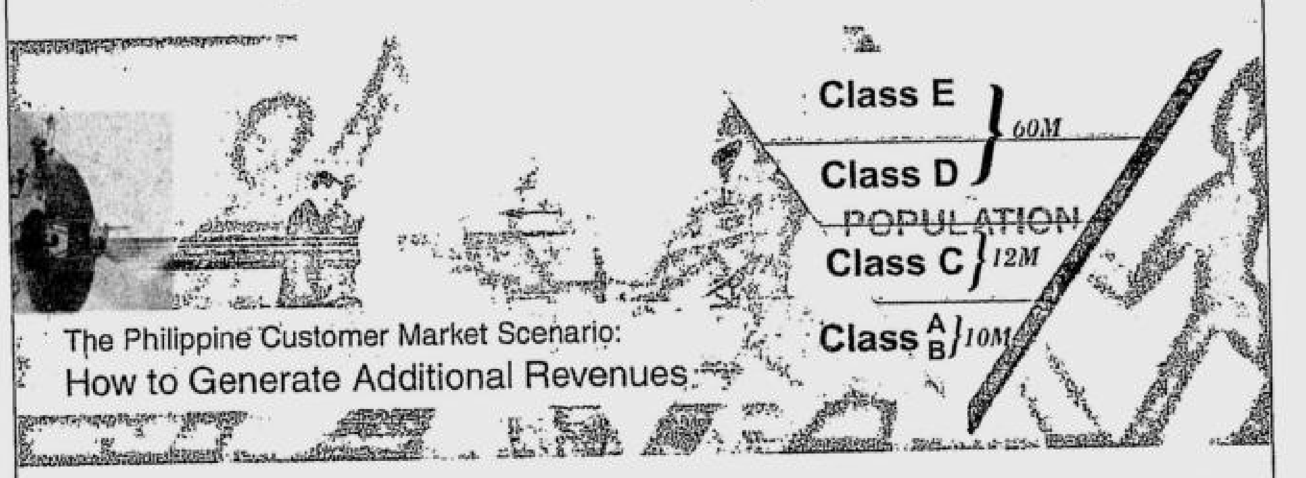
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The Philippine Customer Market Scenario:
How to Generate Additional Revenues

MARKETING TO THE BOTTOM OF THE PYRAMID
June 20 to 22, 2005

What is the Bottom of the Pyramid (BOP)?
In the Philippines, the BOP comprises 60 million or 73 percent of the population, primarily minimum wage earners. The BOP market segment is still a large untapped customer base even though individuals have limited purchasing power. The key to success is to fit the products to the needs of the BOP market.

Why go to the Bottom of the Pyramid?
- In Bangladesh, Graamen Telecom operates 39,000 village phones (VP) serving 50 million villagers in rural areas and earns US$21 in service charge and US$41 in phone bills per VP per month
- In Brazil, Casas Bahia makes furniture and home appliances affordable to the BOP market which accounts for 70 percent of its customers and 90 percent of its total sales volume.
- In the Philippines, the mobile phone industry which generated Php89 billion gross revenues in 2004, serves 30 million phone subscribers, 97 percent of whom are prepaid subscribers, mostly coming from the C, D, E Classes.

Who Should Attend?
CEO, COO and Senior Officers who are involved in business development, marketing and sales, or corporate and strategic planning officers of organizations or businesses dealing with SMEs.

Course Outline
- Understanding the BOP Customer
- Finding Opportunities from the Masses
- Determining the Best Bottom Line for the Bottom Market
- Retooling Your Organization to Serve the Bottom Market
- Making Your Customers Your Business Partners
- Formulating Strategic Applications

For inquiries and reservation call:
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NON-BANK FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

BSP tightens rules on dividend payments

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas has tightened regulations governing the issuance of dividends by quasi-banks to prevent possible diversion of funds.

This was contained in BSP circular 484 issued on May 24 by BSP Officer-in-Charge Amando Tetangco Jr. The circular took effect on the same day.

Quasi-banks are non-bank financial institutions which are authorized by the BSP to borrow funds from the public for relending or for the purchase of receivables. Unlike regular banks, however, quasi-banks are not allowed to take deposits.

The tightening is in line with section 57 of the General Banking Law of 2000, which prohibits banks and quasi-banks from declaring dividends greater than their accumulated net profits.

The new circular said provided that the net amount that could be made available for dividends should be equal to the unrestricted or free retained earnings, and profit and loss summary less the following:

- bad debts against which valuation reserves are not required by the BSP to be set up;
- unbooked valuation reserves, and other unbooked capital adjustments required by the BSP, whether or not allowed to be set up on a staggered basis;
- deferred income tax;
- accumulated profits not yet received but already recorded by the quasi-bank representing its share in profits of its subsidiaries under the equity method of accounting;
- accrued interest net of booked valuation reserves on accrued interest receivable or allowance for uncollectible interest on loans, and
- foreign exchange profit arising from revaluation of foreign exchange denominated accounts.

Banks or quasi-banks are also prohibited from distributing dividends, if at the time of declaration:

- their clearing accounts with the BSP are overdrawn;
- they are deficient in the required liquidity floor for government deposits for five or more consecutive days;
- they do not comply with the liquidity standards/ratios prescribed by the BSP for purposes of determining funds available for dividend declaration;
- they have committed a major violation as may be determined by the BSP.

Landco to put up 12-ha integrated business park in Naga City

LANDCO Pacific Corp. is boosting its portfolio of central business district (CBD) projects with the planned construction in Naga City of a 12-hectare integrated business park, which will house Bicol region's biggest shopping mall.

The business park will be the first of its kind in Metro Naga and is envisioned to become a commercial hub in Camarines Sur.

The development will house several office towers that will become the city's IT zone, as an increasing number of investors look at Naga City as a possible site of call centers and business process outsourcing (BPO) facilities.

Joser Santos, Landco's business development manager for CBDs and shopping centers, said Naga City has strong potentials to become a regional IT hub because of its highly competitive labor force and stature as a university town.

Naga City is the site of several major universities including Ateneo de Naga, Colegio de Sta. Isabel and University of Nueva Caceres.

Alongside the business offices will be prime commercial lots for various retail, general trading, service and hospitality establishments.

Landco said it would institutionalize the organization of business districts to ensure compliance to standards for cleanliness and security. The Naga City development will be the first professionally managed business park and will have its own merchant's association.

A no-frills, straightforward businessman's hotel is also being planned to cater to the high transient population in Naga.

Forming the centerpiece of the business park will be Landco Plaza, an outdoor activity center that can be used for concerts and shows, and an *al fresco* area for cafés, bars and restaurants surrounding the plaza.

The anchor development within the business district is a 55,000-sq.m. shopping center, the city's largest and most complete fully integrated shopping mall. This will be the fourth mall development project of Landco.

About 4,000 jobs are expected to be generated with the full operation of the CBD.

Landco Pacific is a multi-product developer of premium residential resorts, leisure farms, first home residential developments, shopping centers and CBDs, and memorial parks. It is now celebrating its 15th year in the business.

CAMPAIGN VS SUBSTANDARD AUTO PARTS Samson Paden, head of the Department of Trade and Industry's special monitoring assistance to the regional operations group team (Smart), inspects automotive parts being sold by a shop in Banaue, Quezon City during a recent market monitoring activity of the team in that area. The activity is in line with the DTI's efforts to curb the proliferation of substandard automotive components in the market. The team found four stores selling uncertified motor vehicle parts and seized 13 pieces of uncertified imported automotive safety glass (FRR standard for Isuzu), eight units of lead-acid storage batteries (brand name: Napa), six sets of imported safety belt (brand names: Auto Friend and Auto Friend) and two bottles of Pitt Penn brake fluid.

Consumer watchdog seeks amendments to VAT law

By Ronnel W. Domingo

CONSUMER welfare advocate Raul T. Concepcion yesterday called for amendments to the new value-added tax law.

Concepcion, chair of the Consumer and Oil Price Watch, said in a briefing that while his group welcomed the passage of the law, it was nevertheless aware that the measure was "far from ideal."

President Macapagal-Arroyo signed last May 24 the expanded value-added tax (VAT) measure aimed.]

Tax officials said they were optimistic the new VAT law would raise P28.75 billion in additional revenue this year and P104.2 billion yearly starting next year.

Yesterday, Concepcion said consumers had been willing to make sacrifices but of late, they were "disheartened to see that a year after (President Arroyo's new term in office), the same problems still pester us."

"We call on the President in her second year in office to address the following issues: restoration of investor confidence, job creation, education, population management, and mak(ing) the country globally competitive," he said.

In particular, the new law, which takes effect July 1, imposes a 10-percent VAT on electricity and petroleum products-both of which are major inputs in many industries.

"(The President) herself hinted on increasing prices when she said the government wanted to see the effects of the law on prices and would monitor price changes," Concepcion said.

He said a possible amendment to the new law, which could mitigate expected price hikes, would be raising VAT deductions for companies or the so-called input VAT.

"The COPW would meet with the ways and means committees of both the House and the Senate, the Department of Energy and the Energy Regulatory Commission regarding possible amendments to the law," he said.

Inconsistent forestry policies hit

THE GOVERNMENT'S unstable and inconsistent forestry policies, the lack of a comprehensive forestry law, and the short 25-year tenure given to forest management holders remained the biggest issues that plague the forestry sector, said Prescila Dolom of the Development Alternative Inc.-Usaid during the Philippine Forestry Development Forum held recently at the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

"Frequent suspensions, declarations of moratorium on utilization permits, and logging bans have greatly affected the operations of forest-based industries," Dolom said.

"This has created an atmosphere of uncertainty among tenurial holders, processing plant operators and related industries because their operations can be stopped anytime the government deems it," she added.

Dolom said investors were also unsure whether their permit would be renewed after 25 years given the new laws with burdensome requirements (ECC, social acceptability by indigenous and local communities within or adjacent to the protected area) and unstable decision-making policies of the government.

Also, the 25-year tenure given to forest concessionaires discourages the planting of long-gestation premium species, including dipterocarps, and promotes the use of fast-growing species that can be harvested within the contract period.

The government and the wood industry have to jointly address the issues confronting the forestry sector, according to Dolom.

First on the agenda should be the enactment of a National Sustainable Forestry Law "to lessen room for politically influence policy changes."

Reacting to the problems of the forestry sector, Nicolaas K. de Lange, chair of the Chamber of Furniture Industries of the Philippines, said the government should adopt short- and long-term policies that would ensure the sustainable supply of raw materials for the furniture industry.

In the interim, De Lange called for the reduction of tariffs on imported wood and wood products that are used by the country's furniture makers.

VAT, you say? What VAT is that?

By Paul R. Cooper

(2nd of a series)

YESTERDAY'S article examined some of the key principles underpinning a value-added tax (VAT) system. To reduce price distortions, an ideal VAT should have a single rate and limited exemptions.

VAT exemptions are generally not exemptions in the sense people normally think of them. For example, consumers are already implicitly paying VAT on power and petroleum every time they buy goods and services from businesses that used power and petroleum as inputs to their business.

How should the VAT bill be rated? My own assessment is that the bill is reasonably balanced and acceptable. The problem is that the exception—an effective 3-percent minimum VAT—is huge, and threatens to destroy the very foundation of the VAT system. To make matters more problematic, the drafting of the provision is vague.

Policy concerns on the cap

When the idea of putting a cap was originally introduced on the floor of the Senate. The idea was to address to some extent the under-reporting of output VAT and over-reporting of input VAT by non-compliant taxpayers. The original suggestion was a 90-percent cap, or effectively a 1-percent minimum VAT. At that level, the rule should not impact adversely on compliant taxpayers, but would result in non-compliant taxpayers having to account for closer to their true tax liability.

As a general policy consideration, one should question why our legislators are penalizing compliant taxpayers when the fundamental issue is the apparent inability of the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) to implement tax law effectively.

At a 90-percent cap, the measure might still have been defensible as a rough proxy for VAT. However, somewhere in the bicameral process, the rule has become even more punitive with a 70-percent cap. As with most amendments introduced at the bicameral stage, there is no public indication about what lawmakers were thinking when they put the travesty in place.

How far were legislators influenced by the 3-percent percentage tax that is imposed on persons that do not register for VAT?

One of the arguments in Senate debates for taxing the power and petroleum sectors was that if it was good enough for mom-and-pop stores to have to account for the VAT, it was good enough for the biggest companies in the country to do the same. A similar argument here is that if small businesses have to pay a minimum 3-percent tax, why should larger VAT-registered persons get away with paying less?

The problem with this thinking is threefold:

- The percentage tax applies to small businesses in the hard-to-tax sector and a few believe the BIR collects close to what it should from this. Nor should we be overly concerned if this is the case—the revenues are small, and the BIR's efforts would be a lot better focused on larger taxpayers where more significant revenues will be at issue.
- VAT-registered persons incur compliance costs. The 3-percent tax might be better conceived as a slightly more expensive option to allow taxpayers to opt out of the VAT, rather than a punitive rule for small businesses. (If the percentage tax is considered unduly punitive, why is it not just repealed?)
- Ironically, one of the new measures in the Senate bill was to allow taxpayers with turnovers below the registration threshold to register voluntarily for VAT if they believe the 3-percent tax imposition to be excessive. Without the minimum VAT, smaller taxpayers might have been encouraged to enter the more formalized VAT sector.

Perhaps the Department of Finance (DOF) also played a role. The DOF's estimation that increasing the VAT rate from 10 percent to 12 percent would yield P50 billion per year have never appeared that sound based on 2004 collections of around P140 billion. Increasing the VAT rate by 20 percent should at best raise P28 billion, before one makes downward adjustments for income effects (see article one) and potentially higher evasion. If estimates on the revenue yield from a 3 percent minimum VAT are also questionable, this may be because the estimations fail, among other possibilities, to:

- Subtract from the revenue estimations the amount of VAT already being paid by businesses, thus failing to recognize that the revenue yield from a 3 percent minimum VAT is far more than three times the revenue yield from a 1 percent tax;
- Isolate sales subject to 0 percent VAT, or
- Recognize that small taxpayers are more likely to be non-compliant than large taxpayers, so that an estimation based on date for large taxpayers (easier to obtain) cannot merely be extrapolated to the entire VAT base. Have legislators proceeded because the estimates have lulled them into a false sense of security about the likely effect of the amendments?

Potential consequences of the cap

The minimum VAT will distort the way taxpayers conduct business. A 3-percent minimum VAT is more likely to impact on sellers of goods than on sellers of services, as their proportion of taxable inputs are lower (there is no VAT paid when using labor, but there is VAT on the purchase of goods). Consequently, there will be a bias toward consuming services over goods. Businesses may have an incentive to obtain goods from the informal (and potentially tax-evading) sector as there will be no input tax paid for the purchase—in other words, the bill may actively encourage less tax-compliant behavior. Business structures may change; expect buy-sell distributors to convert into commission agents, as this reduces the risk that they will need to pay more than should be paid under a VAT system to cover the 3-percent minimum VAT.

Tax professionals will also have a field day. One only needs to read the amended text of Section 110(B) of the Tax Code to see this: 110(B) Excess Output or Input Tax. If at the end of any taxable quarter the output tax exceeds the input tax, the excess shall be paid by the VAT-registered person. If the input tax exceeds the output tax, the excess shall be carried over to the succeeding quarter or quarters provided that: the input tax inclusive of input VAT carried over from the previous quarter that may be credited in every quarter shall not exceed 70 percent of the output VAT, and that any input tax attributable to zero-rated sales by a VAT-registered person may at his option be refunded or credited against other internal revenue taxes, subject to the provisions of Section 112.

The second proviso will be read to qualify (override) the first, so that the input tax attributable to zero-rated sales will be fully creditable, despite the 70-percent cap. Further, on a strict reading, the cap only applies to input tax carried over from the previous "quarter" (not quarters), implying that an excess input tax from the September 2005 quarter could be fully applied in the March 2006 quarter. In effect, the provision as drafted achieves a one-period one-off deferral of input VAT.

Now answer the following question honestly. Do you expect the BIR to agree with this interpretation? Fun times may be ahead.

Solution to problem exists

Despite the problems with the minimum VAT, a presidential veto was never an option. Who knows what might happen if the VAT bill were forced through Congress again? An alternative solution is available: pass the VAT bill as it stands, but introduce a priority bill to tidy up the drafting in section 110(B) of the Code, before the bill takes effect in July 1, 2005.

Although a cap on input VAT is not consistent with a best-practice VAT system, the idea has merit in a Philippine context, where evasion appears to be widespread. The level of cap needs to be realistic so as not to encourage compliant taxpayers to opt out of the tax base. The cap in the Senate bill (90 percent) may be acceptable, although 95 percent would be better. In setting a level, one should not lose sight of what should be an overriding objective of the government—the BIR improve its administration, in which case a cap would be neither appropriate nor necessary.

At the end of the day, it would be tragic if the final nail in the inbound investment coffin were not the corporate tax rate increase, but a small provision buried in the bill that has not been made visible in any of the comments on bill developments made to the press during the legislative process. *(To be continued)*

(The author is a tax expert and a director of PricewaterhouseCoopers)

Morphing software demo at ProHAIR forum

DURING the recently concluded ProHAIR media forum, invited journalists and guests were asked to try out something totally fun and unusual - an interactive online digital Morphing software. Using this software, participants were given a chance to digitally view themselves going bald or in another hairstyle. To help emphasize the importance of seeking immediate medical treatment to stop and prevent male pattern hair loss, ProHAIR advocates gave the participants a sneak preview of how their appearance significantly changed when they lose their hair.

To achieve this effect, digital photos of the face of some of the invited journalists were taken individually during the ProHAIR media forum. The digital file was then uploaded into the computer with the morphing software - which then took the participant's photo through the 5-step interactive process.

In the first step, the face is immediately transformed into a bald-head effect. Icons are available to manipulate extent of baldness appropriate to the subject. Step two would then show an icon that could adjust and match the skin color with that of the subject. In the third step, the participant is allowed to choose and place on his image a wide variety of hair styles, such as curly hair, straight hair, with bangs, etc. The next step then allows the participant to choose a preferred hair color like black, blonde, brunette, among others. Step five leads the participant to choose whether to make the hairline recede or be restored.

Making the activity doubly fun was the journalist's option to have the manipulated image e-mailed to a friend or loved one, or simply printed out as a souvenir.

ProHAIR is an information advocacy initiated by the collaborative efforts of the Philippine Dermatological Society and the pharmaceutical company Merck Sharp & Dohme (MSD) Philippines. ProHAIR aims to generate widespread awareness for male pattern hair loss (MPHL) commonly known as baldness, as well as inform and educate male sufferers that MPHL is a medical condition therefore it must be addressed by dermatologists (hair and skin experts).

ProHAIR media forum guest lecturer and dermatology specialist Dr. Gio Dimayuga said that MPHL is a medical condition and is referred to as androgenetic alopecia because the hair loss is determined by the male hormones (androgens) and heredity (genetics). It has also been observed that approximately 30 percent of men experience hair loss by age 30, while 50 percent of men by age 50.

Dr. Dimayuga also said in his lecture that MPHL has no cure as in most types of baldness. Although costly, a person with MPHL can opt to undergo transplantation, wherein hair follicles are removed from one part of the scalp and transplanted to the balding area. Topical medications may also help promote hair growth in some persons, according to Dr. Dimayuga. However, there is an oral medication which has been proven to help promote hair growth while stopping further hair loss.

ProHAIR recommends patients see a dermatologist. Only a physician can diagnose and/or treat male pattern hair loss. Contact ProHAIR's hotline no. 878-6338, fax no. 813-1172 for more information on the ProHAIR campaign.

SC JOHNSON PHILS PARTNERS WITH HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Habitat for Humanity, which is more known worldwide for its house-building endeavor is also into disaster response projects and has recently entered into partnerships with other foundations and corporate institutions in the Philippines, for the rehabilitation of areas where Filipino families have been heavily affected by the typhoons/mud slides, more specifically in the areas of Quezon province and Aurora. For this purpose, SC Johnson donated P1,000,000 for the school re-construction program for recently heavily devastated areas in the province of Quezon. This is in keeping with SC Johnson's commitment to 'Give Back' and contribute to the well-being of the community where it conducts business. Photo shows SC Johnson GM Reinhard Schellner (in tie) handing over the symbolical check to Margie Moran-Floirendo, Habitat for Humanity Philippines trustee and chair of the Resource Development Committee, at the SCJ offices last May 17. Looking on are members of SC Johnson's management committee (from right): operations director Nes Felicio, finance director Tessie Latorre, HR director Glo Panganiban, marketing director Gold Tantoco. Habitat of Humanity Philippines representatives: trustee Helen Bartholomew, president and CEO Alberto L. Hugo and communications manager Juan Edmund Martinez.

Education is first for Nippon Life

"MAKANU tané wa haënu." Nothing will grow, if the seed be not sown. Believing that to harvest growth and change, the seed of education must be sown, Nippon Life Philippines always encourages and supports its employees who wish to further their studies through study grants and scholarships here and abroad.

Recently NLP assistant manager-training, Guiseppe Lauro Morta, one of NLP's first life insurance agents, got this chance when he was granted a Japan Development Scholarship (JDS) a two-year scholarship program sponsored by the Japanese government and administered by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (Jica).

Taking up the Master in Business Administration (MBA) Program major in Strategic Management at the Waseda Business School in Waseda University, one of the most prestigious private universities in Japan, Morta will try to gain more expertise in his line of work by applying the skills and knowledge he would gain from his stint in Japan.

"I believe that taking the MBA Program, majoring in Strategic Management best complement my over ten years experience in life insurance training, marketing and corporate planning," Morta says.

Nearing its 125th anniversary in 2007, the Waseda University boasts of a vast alumni network of many well-known leaders and industry luminaries in Japan and in Asia. For Morta's achievement, NLP is in high spirits and remains steadfast in valuing education not just for its employees but also to its growing and valued clientele.

"Knowledge is the foundation of many dreams fulfilled. It is the wish of the company to extend whatever it can to the public in order to strengthen their future especially in the field of education," says NLP president and CEO Yoshinobu Kimura.

"As we protect our policy holders by ensuring the inherent strength of the company in its ability to pay educational claims in the future, we also see to it that our employees get the needed boost in their respective careers, just like Morta," adds Kimura.

Chosen from among the twenty short listed candidates, Morta said that his previous exposure in Japan through NLP sponsorships such as the Tokyo Sales Drive he attended in 1999 gave him an edge over the other candidates.

For the three-year history of the scholarship, Morta is the first to qualify from a Japanese private company. JDS is primarily a scholarship meant for Japanese government employees only.

Prior to JDS, Morta was also able to further his studies through NLP's Life Office Management Association Inc (Loma), a series of tests that advances one's insurance knowledge and expertise and gives cash incentives to employees.

"My superiors are fully supportive of my MBA studies, especially because I will be studying in a well-known Japanese university. I am grateful because despite the short notice they allowed me to pursue my studies," says Morta of his NLP family.

MANILA DRAGONS OFF TO TAIPEI

The Men's Team of the Manila Dragons Dragonboat Rowing Team (MDDRT), an affiliate member of the Philippine Dragon Boat Federation, will see action at the 2005 Taipei International Dragon Boat Race Championship on June 10 to 12. The team's official carrier is Philippine Airlines, and is supported by 8ight Minds Advertising Inc, Coca Cola Phils and Philippine Daily Inquirer. For inquiries, email mla_dragons@yahoo.com or visit the team's website at www.maniladragons.com.ph for other team activities.

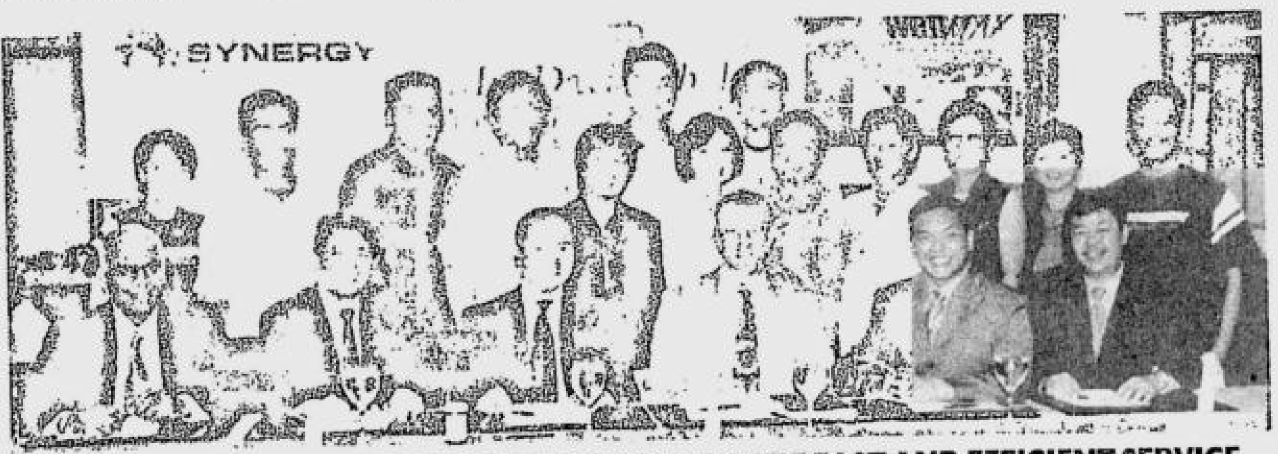
Bits Clips

Aussie vein specialist visits Manila

DR. Hoo Lin Saw, medical director of Lauren Vein International will be in Manila on June 13 to 15. Dr. Saw will perform non-surgical treatments of varicose veins and spider veins through sclerotherapy at Lauren Vein Centre, 4/F Angelus Plaza Bldg., 104 Vicente Rufino St., Legaspi Village, Makati City. Lauren Vein Centre provides sclerotherapy, a treatment for all types of veins with the use of micro-injection instead of surgery. Dr. Saw says experience gained in more than 10 years of using such procedure will ensure patients that veins regardless of size will disappear safely without surgery. For more inquiries, call 894-2361/893-9771 or fax at 813-0630 or text Edna at 0916-4554399, Tess at 0919-845-2966.

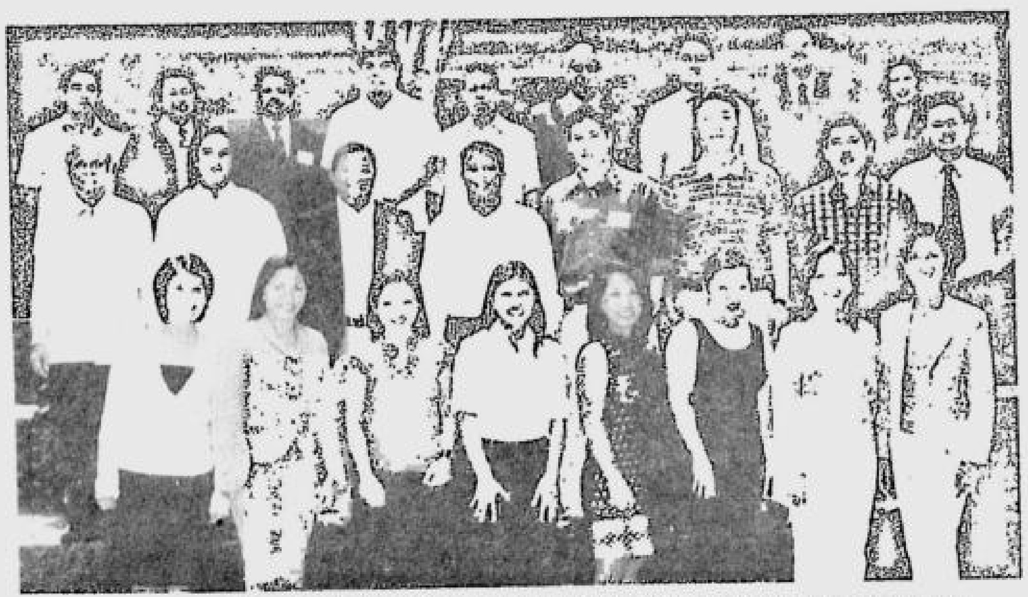
'Beat the VAT' promo

PLASTIC Surgery Associates will be offering a 30 percent discount on rates for all its cosmetic surgery services effective June 13 up to July 13. Dubbed as "Beat the VAT" promo special, it offers its customers the last chance to enjoy plastic surgery services at the old rates before the new VAT law takes effect. Service covered under the 30 percent discount promo include breast enlargement and augmentation, facial rejuvenation, abdominoplasty (tummy tuck), liposuction/liposculpture, among others. Plastic Surgery Associates is composed of board-certified plastic surgeons who are all members of the Philippine Association of Plastic Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgeons. Their services are available at Beauty Central Arcade at Greenhills Shopping Center, Clinica Manila at SM Megamall A in Ortigas Center and Casa Medica at SM Southmall in Las Piñas.



SYNERGY WORLDWIDE PHILS TAPS WEBMAX FOR MORE FAST AND EFFICIENT SERVICE

Synergy Worldwide Phils recently signed a memorandum of agreement with Webmax, a business solutions company. Under the agreement, Synergy acquired the services of Webmax to develop its own software that would enable them to monitor inventory and sales at real time 24/7 throughout the country. Present during the signing were (sitting from left): Dr. Anantharaj Abraham, medical director of Synergy Southeast Asia; Jessie Imperio Jr., country manager of Synergy Phils; Carlos Paglinawan Jr., president of Webmax; David Phelps, vice president of Synergy Asia-Pacific; Dave Almarinez, Chief Country Stockist - Philippines and William Francis, Top Leader, Singapore. Standing (from left) Ruby Capistrano, operations officer, Synergy Phils; Fernando Buco; Winefredo Villarama; John Paul Sy; Janeth Solomon; Richard Ang; Ofelia Cruz; Wilmer Dee Co, Synergy Country Stockist in Mindanao; Teresita Tan, Synergy Cavite Authorized Business Center; Julieta De Vera; Victoria Hernandez; Rosario Romero and Edgar Afuang.



NEW GRADUATES OF AIM'S 19TH MARKETING STRATEGY COURSE

AIM welcomes new graduates to its 19th Marketing Strategy Course held last May 16 to 27 at the AIM campus. The program was directed by professor Joe M. Faustino, a faculty of the Executive Education and Lifelong Learning Center (Excell). Twenty two managers and executives from the pharmaceutical, agribusiness, food, banking, information technology, cement, paint, gasoline, transportation and media industries completed the program. Among the companies represented are Unilab, Solvay Pharma, TMO Holdings Corporation, Bayer Cropscience, Alsons Aquaculture, Cornworld Breeding Systems, EAC Industrial Ingredients, Caltex Philippines and the Philippine Daily Inquirer. Also represented are three companies from India, Andhra Bank, Karnataka Antiobiotics and Pharmaceutical Limited and The Associated Cement and Janssen of Korea. AIM is currently accepting applications to the 20th Marketing Strategy Course slated for August 1 to 12. For inquiries, contact Jane Maniapig, Yola Genuino or Ronald Valencia of the Excell Marketing Group at tel. nos. 893-2050, 892-4011 local 228.

ProductFILES

An academic adventure with Hi-Tec

HI-TEC, one of the most passionate footwear companies around, gives your back-to-school experience a different kind of high. Known for its attractive, comfortable, lightweight designs, Hi-Tec shoes equips the wearer with an enjoyable walk-around feeling that you'll need when you transfer from one class to another. As an added bonus to the great-looking, comfort you can bring to school, you can also get a free premium Hi-Tec backpack just by presenting a single receipt purchase worth P2,500 of Hi-Tec shoes. It's like getting a 50 percent discount on top-quality shoes plus an equally impressive backpack for free. Grab that gorgeously stunning pair of Hi-Tec shoes coupled with the free Hi-Tec backpack before June 15. Better troop to the nearest Olympic Village, Sports Central, Toby's and Bratpack shops right away before somebody else beats you to it. Who says going to school means having to leave all the fun and excitement of your summer vacation behind? With Hi-Tec shoes to prance around in, you'll definitely love walking to class, for it's like having a different adventure in the academic jungle everyday.

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Transportation and Communications
MARITIME INDUSTRY AUTHORITY
Cebu Maritime Regional Office
Ground Floor CCCI Center, cor. 11th & 13th Avenues,
North Reclamation Area, Cebu City

Case No. CMRO 05-104

RE: Application for grant of Certificate of Public Convenience (CPC) to operate a liner service in the operation of its ship/s in its/their applied route for the carriage of passengers and cargoes and to charge deregulated rates and to operate under a deregulated schedule of trips pursuant to Republic Act No. 9295 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations.

JPS SHIPPING CORPORATION,
Applicant.
x---x

ORDER

This refers to the Application for grant of Certificate of Public Convenience (CPC) to operate the following ship/s in its/their routes, under the following sailing frequency/ies, schedule of trips and rates
FOR TRAMP OPERATIONS

Name of Ship	Area of Operation	Service/s offered/to be offered
MV PAMROS	Any ports in the Philippines	Carriage of Cargoes
MV BEYA	Any ports in the Philippines	Carriage of Cargoes
MV MIA	Any ports in the Philippines	Carriage of Cargoes
MV JOVIC	Any ports in the Philippines	Carriage of Cargoes

The Applicant shall cause the publication of this Order once in a newspaper once in any of the five (5) major newspapers of national circulation in the Philippines.

The Applicant shall likewise simultaneously cause the posting of this Order in a conspicuous place at the affected ports, ships, Applicant's premises, passenger terminals and ticketing offices as applicable.

The Applicant shall present the jurisdictional, qualification and documentary requirements in a summary proceeding to be conducted on 14 June 2005 at 2:00 P.M. at the Hearing Room, Cebu Maritime Regional Office Ground Floor, CCCI Bldg. cor. 11th & 13th Avenues, North Reclamation Area, Cebu City which is within seven (7) days from the date of publication/posting.

The Applicant shall be required to make a written Formal Offer of Evidence (FOP) after which the application is deemed submitted for resolution/decision.

WITNESS, the Honorable Administrator VICENTE T. SUAZO, JR. this 30th day of May 2005 at Cebu City, Philippines.

(Sgd.) GLENN G. CABANEZ
Regional Director

(PDI – June 7, 2005)

A Globe Girlfriends summer makeover party

SUN-kissed looks and sizzling style were the order of the day for lucky Globe Girlfriends and their best female friends at the Globe Girlfriends Glam Makeover held recently at Glorietta 3. To land a spot in this posh pamper fest, members of Globe Handyphone's fab femme club took part in an exclusive on-air radio promo conducted by Radioworks partner K-Lite 103.5.

Twelve gal pals were waited on hand and foot by the courteous staff of popular beauty chain David's Salon, who started the royal treatment with manicure, pedicure and foot spa services. Expert stylists then addressed each Globe Girlfriend's mane concerns, cutting and coloring their locks to perfection, as well as giving them a selection of intensive hair treatments. And to cap off the stylish treat, makeup artists got the girls all dolled up with summer's luscious shades.

DAVID'S SALON

GLOBE Girlfriends Thea Ranes, Jems Alentahan and Nina Santiago get all glammed up.

While the makeover was taking place, mall-going Globe Girlfriends were treated to a series of style workshops, also facilitated by David's Salon. Senior stylist Igie Sicuan demonstrated his makeup expertise, while Astrid Crisologo lectured on proper hair care. Salon founder David Charlton even dropped by to give Globe Girlfriends a few tips on choosing the most flattering cut and style. In between sessions, audience members took part in fun games and received exclusive Globe Girlfriends goodies. Finally, acoustic babe Noah took to the stage and serenaded the audience with pop tunes and soulful ballads.

"This was such an enjoyable day," remarked freelance makeup artist Nina Santiago, a loyal Globe Girlfriend member. Nina was accompanied by best buds and fellow members Thea Ranes and Jems Alentajan. "We certainly made the most of this pampering session," Jems added. Other winners shared the same enthusiastic response. "The treatments are definitely something to be excited about," said Globe Girlfriend Inja Fajatin, "and I'm looking forward to taking part in future events."

The successful makeover is part of the Globe Girlfriends Super Summer Events, a series of girl-powered weekend activities representing the various facets of the modern Filipina lifestyle. With sensational events and fantastic perks, don't you think it's about time you became a Globe Girlfriend? Just text CLUB to 2209 for free and be a part of the season's hottest extravaganza.

HAIR maestro David Charlton teaches Globe Girlfriends how to have stylin' summer 'dos.

2GO
an Aboitiz

DELIVERING YOUR PROFESSIONAL LICENSE AT YOUR DOORSTEP

Imagine getting your professional license minus the hassles of lining up and pushing your way through the crowd of some 3,000 other professional hopefuls. Now you can, as 2GO delivers your professional license right at your doorstep through PRC's DoxPro. Aboitiz freight group, 2GO, and the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) have joined forces to overcome inefficiency and bring the power to the Filipino professional through DoxPro, a process that enables professionals to renew licenses and apply for authentications/certifications of professional documents just by calling the PRC hotline. Just dial 898-7845, and 2GO will deliver your official documents in no time. Meanwhile, 2GO also signed a Memorandum of Agreement with PRC as it won the bidding to service the said government agency in all its cargo handling and management. Present during the MoA signing were: (from left), Onnie Reantaso, 2GO special projects account executive; Michelle Aboitiz, AVP, 2GO Distribution; PRC chair Leonor Tripon-Rosero; and Teofilo Sison Jr., PRC director, financial and administrative services. 2GO promises to give the most customized and streamlined solutions for your business needs. For more information, call (02)528-7246 or visit www.2GO.com.ph.

Jack 'n Jill's name to fame

"JACK and Jill went up the hill to fetch a pail of water..." Did you know that the phenomenal brand Jack 'n Jill actually got its name from the popular nursery rhyme?

Unknown to many, when John Gokongwei was brainstorming the perfect brand name for a new line of snack foods from Universal Robina Corp (URC), the rhyme easily came to mind. The name Jack 'n Jill met his prerequisites: it had a nice ring to it, was easy to remember, and best of all, it was a name that kids would easily recognize.

Thus, the brand that made Chippy and Pretzels household names was born.

In almost 40 years, Jack 'n Jill has consistently and continuously introduced various products for different markets, made distinct by different brand names. And behind these brand names are interesting anecdotes on their origins.

Factoid number one is how Spuds, one of Jack 'n Jill's newer offerings, got its name. Simply put, spud is another name for potato. And because this Jack 'n Jill product is one of the yummiest potato snacks around, they couldn't have come up with a better name for this crunchy-licious snack.

Ever wondered how the now-popular multi-grain snack Nova got its name? Inspired by the heavenly body that shines ever so brightly, the snack is considered a real star in the heart of health buffs. The name is also indicative of the active, dynamic lifestyle of the people who are particularly fond of this snack.

Jack 'n Jill's chocolates line also has its own cute little trivia. Did you know that the well-loved name Nips is the reverse of the word spin? The inspiration came from the spinning process used to create those colorful candy-coated dots of chocolate that delight children of all ages.

Another classic is Cloud 9. True to its name, this heavenly delight makes everyone feel like they're on cloud 9. Made with smooth nougat, rich caramel and crunchy peanut quarters enrobed in luscious chocolate, Cloud 9 makes for an exceptionally enticing treat every time.

Among those that remain to be particularly popular is Jack 'n Jill Pretzels. Though its name is pretty much self-explanatory, there's an interesting anecdote behind the packaging design. The original artists who designed the Pretzel boxes got their inspiration from the "wooden fort" look achieved by putting the Pretzel sticks side by side. And so, the first Jack and Jill Pretzel dolls were dressed up as Indians replete with arrows and axes. Today, the fun-loving duo is still ever-present in every pack of Jack 'n Jill Pretzels.

As indicated by its product names, its packaging and of course, its vast line-up of offerings, Jack 'n Jill and the word "fun" have become inseparable. Already synonymous to great-tasting, high-quality food products that easily find their way to Filipino homes, Jack 'n Jill continues to add color and enjoyment to the culture of snacking.

LA Gear's It's a Girl Thang! Mall Tour at Glorietta

THE GLORIETTA Activity Center in Ayala, Makati was the hippest place to be when LA Gear recently set off its 2nd installment of the It's a Girl Thang! Athleisure Mall Tour.

Dedicated to all sassy teens and females, LA Gear's Athleisure Mall is a celebration of all things fun, fashionable and fabulous.

Hundreds converged at the LA Gear Athleisure grounds to sign up and avail of one free service from any of 5 super cool booths like hairstyling and fast hairbraiding at the Tresses-R-Us booth; body care and waxing services at The Powder Room; a magazine-style pictorial at In the Frame; trinkets and crafts at The Beauty Beads; a chick lit and magazine corner at The Reading Chair; and hot LA Gear fashion and apparel at the Style Salon. Loads of freebies and cool prizes were also given away to lucky Athleisure participants who came to take part in this one-of-a-kind event.

The whole-day affair also featured the latest Athleisure collection as models walked down the runway wearing hot LA Gear wear for the summer season. From sexy sleeveless tops, hip cargo pants, to trendy sneakers, LA Gear style is definitely the must-have look.

Also on the agenda was the 2nd LA Gear Street Dance Competition where nine schools had a dance show-down in a test of choreography, rhythm, and school spirit. University of the Philippines' Street Dance Club was hailed as street dancing champs and won a total of P 20,000 worth of cash and gift certificate from LA Gear. The Sebastian Danz League of San Sebastian College, Manila came in 1st place and took home P10,000 worth of cash and gift certificate, while the Funky Jazz Extreme of the University of Makati was named 2nd runner-up and received P 6,000 worth of cash and gift certificate.

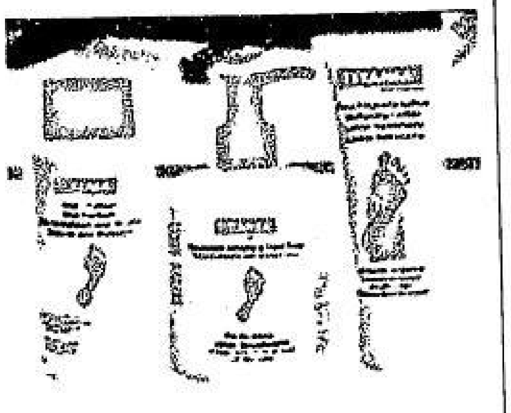
Catch the girl-power frenzy as LA Gear's It's a Girl Thang! Athleisure Mall Tour makes its rounds at the Robinsons Place Manila in July.

The LA Gear's It's a Girl Thang! Athleisure Mall Tour is brought to you by The Beadshop, Goody, Strands Lifestyle Salon & Spa, Summer's Eve, Body Natur, BIC, Titania, OMF Literature, Filstar Distribuitor, Del Monte 202, Nalgene, Block & White, Listerine Pocket Packs, Ponstan 250 SF, Emerald Headway, Chalk Magazine, Pink Magazine, with online media partners, Yehey.com, Your Internet Lifestyle, and ClickTheCity.com.

THE MOMENT of truth. Host Sheryle Crystal is joined by Philgear International's Vangie Chua (left) and Powerdance member and competition head judge Nancy Crowe (right).

ProductFiles

Celebrate Father's Day with Titania



THE PERSON who walked that extra mile for you deserves a Titania Foot Spa gift pack this father's day. Formulated especially to soothe the aches and pains of fatherhood, the Titania Foot Spa trio makes sure that your daddy's feet are well taken care of.

The Titania Foot Spa gift pack comes with the Titania Vital Footbath that has Dead Sea salt that makes skin soft and smooth. It also revitalizes and deodorizes while taking away the pains of tired and painful feet. The Titania Double Sided Foot File and Pumice Stone scrub away dirt and exfoliate the feet's skin. The Titania Smooth Heel Cream helps heal and prevent cracked heels within days. And the Titania Foot Powder keeps your dad's feet fresh throughout the day.

The ingredients that make up Titania products are derived from nature so it is gentle to the skin.

These foot care products help maintain the beauty and health of your dad's feet. Titania helps maintain the feet of the person whose footsteps you are proud to follow. Give him a Titania Foot Spa gift pack this Father's Day.

Titania is exclusively distributed by Filstar Distributors Corp., 2/F Reliance Center Bulding, E. Rodriguez Jr.Ave., Ugong, Pasig City with telephone numbers 671-0555 and 671-3171.

A global brand for the Filipino

SPLASH Corp, headed by husband and wife tandem Doctors Rolando and Rosalinda Hortaleza, is a Filipino company that lives by the principle that going global is not an impossible feat to achieve.

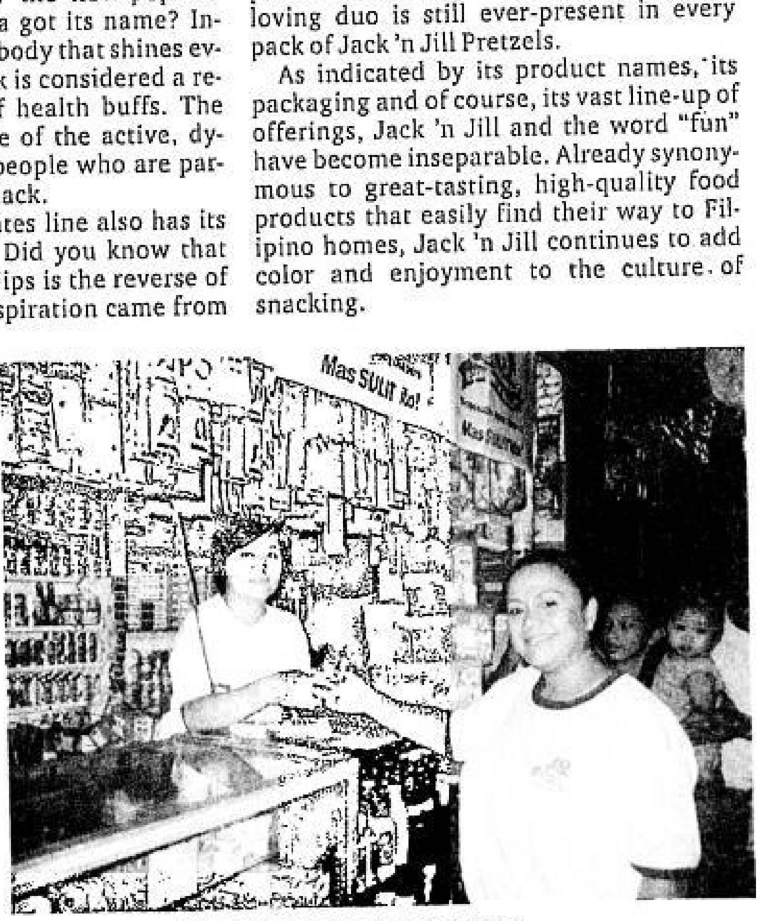
It began as a simple backyard enterprise, today it has evolved into a global business empire competing against international players in the beauty and personal care industry. Despite the fact that it is already a multi-billion peso operation, a far cry from the enterprise that began 20 years ago with only P12,000, the Hortalezas affirm that they will always remember where they came from, and use the lessons they learned.

"For Splash, globalization was inevitable," said Dr. Rolando Hortaleza. The company's venture into the international markets began when overseas workers started bringing Splash products to their respective workplaces abroad. With the unparalleled success of these Filipino-made products in the domestic market as well as abroad through the OFWs, they have become unwitting brand ambassadors inspired by the company "to overcome barriers and pursue global market expansion." Without aggressively promoting their goods in other countries, Splash products have become popular with the local population of countries in Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam, and the Middle East.

With 12 companies comprising Splash's business conglomerate namely, Splash Holdings Inc, Splash Corporation, the Splash Research Institute, Splash International Inc, P.T. Corporation, World Partners Insurance Brokers Inc and Splash Properties Inc, Splash today is vindicated in its belief in the Filipino capability, a fact embodied by the company's corporate cause.

"The company is fully committed to always uplift the pride and economic well-being of the Filipino," says Dra. Rosalinda Hortaleza. "We at Splash will keep striving to serve them, with high-quality products, bringing them to wherever they are."

Splash Corporation recently celebrated its 20th anniversary at The Fort with former President Corazon Aquino as special guest. It was attended by notable people from the media, the business community, and the family of Splash.


Mas SULIT ka!

EQ PA-BUWENAS BARANGAY RAID

EQ Diaper's product endorser Ruby Rodriguez is spearheading the on-going 'EQ Pa-buwenas Barangay raid' , a project wherein EQ Team selects barangays and public markets in Metro Manila, North and South Luzon to give incentives to loyal patrons of EQ such as the 'suking tindahan' who sells EQ Diapers and also to its consumers. To ensure the success of this project, two weeks prior to the scheduled raid activity, EQ raiding team representatives visit the venue of the raid to conduct pre-event announcement efforts via distribution of flyers containing mechanics of the event, installation of strategically located merchandising collaterals, an announcement system using a live barker and a recorida van to invite the public. Shown in photo is EQ Diapers' product endorser Ruby Rodriguez during her visit to one of the sari-sari stores selling EQ during the day of the raid and collects the coupons from the participating 'suking tindahan' owners. The coupons are then raffled off during the culminating part of the raid where all store owners may have the chance to join and receive prizes from EQ during the on-site 'Pachinko Game' such as handy appliances and gadgets to winning 'suking tindahan'. In addition to this, EQ consumers also gets cash as prizes in the raffle draw slated on that day. This project will go on until July 15.

TUESDAY, JUNE 7, 2005

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Republic of the Philippines
Province of Rizal
Municipality of Morong

Office of the Municipal Planning and Development Coordinator

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Municipality of Morong Bids and Award Committee (BAC), is inviting qualified bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the Proposed Construction of 10,000 Gals. Capacity Elevated Steel Water Tank, Brgy. Lagundi, Morong, Rizal, Proposed Construction of Shallow Well Level-I, @ Brgy Bombongan and Brgy. Lagundi, Morong, Rizal, And Supply and Delivery (Pipe Laying) of 50 mmO G.I. Pipe and 12 mmO G.I. Pipe @ Sitio Yapak, Brgy. Lagundi, Morong, Rizal.

Approved Budget for the Proposed Construction of 10,000 Gals. Steel Water Tank	P	1,100,000.00
Approved Budget for the Proposed Construction of Shallow Well Level-I	P	250,000.00
Approved Budget for the Supply and Delivery (Pipe Laying) of 50 mm O G.I. Pipe and 12 mm O G.I. Pipe	P	150,000.00

SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

Issuance of Eligibility and Bidding Documents	Pre-Bid Conference	Submission and Opening of Eligibility and Bid Envelopes
June 10, 2005 10:00 AM 2nd Flr.,Morong Municipal Building Office of the Municipal Budget Officer	June 15, 2005 10:00 AM 2nd Flr.,Morong Municipal Building Office of the Municipal Budget Officer	June 17, 2005 10:00 AM 2nd Flr.,Morong Municipal Building Office of the Municipal Budget Officer

That as of bidding date, June 21, 2005 10:00 AM, prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last 2 years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use for non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualifications of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

Eligibility and documents shall be issued to applicants upon filing of a Letter of Intent to apply and payment of a non-refundable bidding fee of P 500.00 in the form of Cash or Manager's check in favor of Municipality of Morong.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR). Only applicants who paid bid fees shall be allowed to attend the Pre-Bid Conference and submit Bid proposals.

The Municipality of Morong thru the Bids and Awards Committee reserves the right to reject any and all bids and/or part thereof, or waived any defect contained therein and may accept the offer which it deems the lowest calculated responsive bid.

(Sgd.) YOLANDA T. ALCANTARA
BAC Chairman

(PDI--June 7 & 14, 2005)

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Republic of the Philippines
Department of Transportation and Communications
MARITIME INDUSTRY AUTHORITY
Cebu Maritime Regional Office
Ground Floor CCCI Center, cor. 11th & 13th Avenues,
North Reclamation Area, Cebu City

Case No. CMRO 05-074

RE : Application for grant of certificate of Public Convenience (CPC) to operate a liner service in the operation of its ship/s in its/their applied route for the carriage of passengers and to charge deregulated rates and to operate under a deregulated schedule of trips pursuant to Republic Act No 9295 and its implementing Rules and Regulations.

MAYPALAD SHIPPING CORPORATION,
Applicant.
x-- x

ORDER

This refers to the Application for grant of Certificate of Public Convenience (CPC) to operate the following ship/s in its/their route/s, under the following sailing frequency/ies, schedule of trips and rates:

1. For Liner Operation

Name of Ship/s	Service/s offered/to be offered
MV LEYTE STAR	Carriage of Passengers and Cargoes
MV CEBU STAR	Carriage of Passengers and Cargoes
MV SAMAR STAR	Carriage of Passengers and Cargoes
MV GUIUAN	Carriage of Passengers and Cargoes

Route/s to be served:
Cebu – Tacloban and vice versa: Cebu – Tubod, Lanao del Norte and vice versa. Cebu-Liloan, Southern Leyte-Cabalian-Liloan-Cebu-Cabalian-Liloan-Cebu, Cebu-Cantilan-Cebu-Palompon-Cebu-Palompon

Sailing Frequency(ies)Schedule

Departure			Arrival		
Port	Day	Time	Port	Day	Time
Cebu	Tue	6:00 PM	Tacloban	Wed	9:00 AM
Tacloban	Wed	4:00 PM	Cebu	Thu	5:00 AM
Cebu	Thu	6:00 PM	Tacloban	Fri	9:00 AM
Tacloban	Fri	4:00 PM	Cebu	Sat	5:00 AM
Cebu	Sat	6:00 PM	Tacloban	Sun	9:00 AM
Tacloban	Sun	4:00 PM	Cebu	Mon	5:00 AM
Cebu	Mon	6:00 PM	Tubod	Tue	8:30 AM
Tubod	Tue	4:00 PM	Cebu	Wed	7:30 AM
Cebu	Wed	6:00 PM	Tubod	Thu	8:30 AM
Tubod	Thu	4:00 PM	Cebu	Fri	7:30 AM
Cebu	Fri	6:00 PM	Tubod	Sat	8:30 AM
Tubod	Sat	4:00 PM	Cebu	Sun	7:30 AM
Cebu	Mon	8:00 PM	Liloan	Tue	4:00 AM
Liloan	Tue	9:00 AM	Cabalian/St. Bernard	Tue	11:00 AM
Cabalian/St. Bernard	Thu	12:00 NN	Liloan	Thu	4:00 PM
Liloan	Thu	6:00 PM	Cebu	Fri	2:30 AM
Cebu	Fri	8:00 PM	Cabalian/St. Bernard	Sat	6:30 AM
Cabalian/St. Bernard	Sun	12:00 NN	Liloan	Sun	4:00 PM
Liloan	Sun	7:30 PM	Cebu	Mon	2:30 PM
Cebu	Tue	5:30 PM	Cantilan	Wed	9:30 AM
Cantilan	Wed	5:30 PM	Cebu	Thu	9:30 AM
Cebu	Thu	9:30 PM	Palompon	Fri	3:30 AM
Palompon	Fri	9:00 PM	Cebu	Sat	3:00 AM
Cebu	Sat	9:30 PM	Palompon	Sun	3:30 AM
Palompon	Sun	9:00 PM	Cebu	Mon	3:00 AM

Schedule of Rates (Per Link)

Passage Rates

LINKS		Type of Accommodation/Class	Rate
From	To		
Cebu	Tacloban	Upper Class	P 300.00
Tacloban	Cebu	Lower Class	P 280.00
Cebu	Tubod, Lanao del Norte	Upper Class	P 360.00
Tubod, Lanao del Norte	Cebu	Lower Class	P 340.00
Cebu	Liloan, Southern Leyte	Upper Class	P 270.00
Liloan, Southern Leyte	Cebu	Lower Class	P 250.00
Liloan, Southern Leyte	Cabalian/St. Bernard	Upper Class	P 270.00
Cabalian/St. Bernard	Liloan, Southern Leyte	Lower Class	P 250.00
Cebu	Cabalian/St. Bernard	Upper Class	P 270.00
Cabalian/St. Bernard	Cebu	Lower Class	P 250.00
Cebu	Cantilan	Upper Class	P 500.00
Cantilan	Cebu	Lower Class	P 450.00
Cebu	Palompon	Upper Class	P 160.00
Palompon	Cebu	Lower Class	P 175.00

Cargo Rates

LINKS		Class A	Class B	Class C
From	To			
Cebu	Tacloban	600.00	475.00	410.00
Tacloban	Cebu	600.00	475.00	410.00
Cebu	Tubod	590.00	450.00	400.00
Tubod	Cebu	590.00	450.00	400.00
Cebu	Liloan	500.00	450.00	350.00
Liloan	Cebu	500.00	450.00	350.00
Liloan	Cabalian/St. Bernard	500.00	450.00	350.00
Cabalian/St. Bernard	Liloan	500.00	450.00	350.00
Cebu	Cabalian/St. Bernard	500.00	450.00	350.00
Cabalian/St. Bernard	Cebu	500.00	450.00	350.00
Cebu	Cantilan	750.00	600.00	550.00
Cantilan	Cebu	750.00	600.00	550.00
Cebu	Palompon	550.00	500.00	400.00
Palompon	Cebu	550.00	500.00	400.00

2. For Cargo Operation

Name of Ship/s	Area of Operation	Service/s offered/to be offered
MV PALAWAN STAR	Cebu (Homeport) to any ports in the Philippines	Carriage of Cargoes only
MV MARK – 1	Cebu (Homeport) to any ports in the Philippines	Carriage of Cargoes only

The Applicant shall cause the publication of this order once in a newspaper once in any of the five (5) major newspaper of national circulation in the Philippines.

The Applicant shall likewise simultaneously cause the posting of this Order in a conspicuous place at the affected ports, ships, Applicant's premises, passengers terminal/s and ticketing offices, as applicable.

The Applicant shall present the jurisdictional, qualification and documentary requirements in a summary proceeding to be conducted on 08 June 2005 at 2:00 P.M at the Hearing Room, Cebu Maritime Regional Office, Ground Floor, CCCI Bldg., cor. 11th and 13th Avenues, North Reclamation Area, Cebu City which is within seven (7) days from the date of publication/posting.

The Applicant shall be required to make a written Formal Offer of Evidence (FOE), afterwhich the application is deemed submitted for resolution/decision.

WITNESS, the Honorable Administrator, VICENTE T. SUAZO, JR., this 26th day of May 2005 at Cebu City, Philippines.

(Sgd.) GLENN G. CABANEZ
Regional Director

(PDI – June 7, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Transportation and Communications
MARITIME INDUSTRY AUTHORITY
Cebu Maritime Regional Office
Ground Floor CCCI Center, cor. 11th & 13th Avenues
North Reclamation Area, Cebu City

Case No. CMRO 05-121

RE Application for grant of Certificate of Public Convenience (CPC) to operate a liner service in the operation of its ship/s in its/their applied route for the carriage of passengers and cargoes and to charge deregulated rates and to operate under a deregulated schedule of trips pursuant to Republic Act No. 9295 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations

HOSANNA SHIPPING CORPORATION,
Applicant.
x- x

ORDER

This refers to the Application for grant of Certificate of Public Convenience (CPC) to operate the following ship/s in its/their route/s, under the following sailing frequency/ies, schedule of trips and rates.

FOR TRAMP OPERATIONS:

Name of Ship	Area of Operation	Service/s Offered/to be Offered
MV GOLDEN FRANCE	Any ports in the Phils	Carriage of Cargoes
MV GOLDEN GIDEON	Any ports in the Phils	Carriage of Cargoes
MV GOLDEN HOPE	Any ports in the Phils	Carriage of Cargoes
MV GOLDEN INDIA	Any ports in the Phils	Carriage of Cargoes
MV GOLDEN KING	Any ports in the Phils	Carriage of Cargoes

The Applicant shall cause the publication of this Order once in a newspaper once in any of the five (5) major newspapers of national circulation in the Philippines.

The Applicant shall likewise simultaneously cause the posting of this Order in a conspicuous place at the affected ports, ships, Applicant's premises, passenger terminal/s and ticketing offices, as applicable.

The Applicant shall present the jurisdictional, qualification and documentary requirements in a summary proceeding to be conducted on 10 June 2005 at 2:00 p.m. at the Hearing Room, Cebu Maritime Regional Office, Ground Floor, CCCI Bldg., cor. 11th and 13th Avenues, North Reclamation Area, Cebu City which is within seven (7) days from the date of publication/posting.

The Applicant shall be required to make a written Formal Offer of Evidence (FOE), afterwhich, the application is deemed submitted for resolution/decision.

WITNESS, the Honorable Administrator, VICENTE T. SUAZO, JR. this 2nd day of June 2005 in Cebu City, Philippines.

(Sgd.) GLENN G. CABANEZ
Regional Director

(PDI--June 7, 2005)

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Day before publication

"I am the Resurrection and the Life; He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies, and whoever believes in Me will never die." – **John 11:25-26**

ATTY. EUCLIDES "ED" A. ABCEDE

of Lucena City

Former OIC – City Mayor – Lucena City
Past Governor – IBP – Southern Luzon Region
Past President – IBP – Quezon Chapter
Past Illustrious Fellow – Upsilon Sigma Phi

Passed away on June 5, 2005 at the age of 66.

His children **Learned** and **Sunshine**, Daughter-in-law **Gloi-dee** and grandchildren **Kyle** & **Kobi**, Brothers **Dennis** and **Sid**, Sisters **Zayda** and **Thelma**, brothers and sisters-in-law and relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Kamagong St., Employees Village, Brgy. Gulang-gulang, Lucena City.

Interment will be on Saturday, June 11, 2005 at 2:00 o'clock in the afternoon, at Lucena Memorial Park, Lucena City.

FAUSTA LEGASPI-AVENDAÑO

widow of the late **ISIDRO S. AVENDAÑO, SR.**

Peacefully joined our Lord on June 4, 2005 at the age of 89.

Her children :	**Priscilla, Nazario, Isidro Jr., Florencia, Angelita, Virginia, Ruben, Valentino, Teresita & Modesta;**
Their spouses :	**Conrado Cruz, Ernani Valencia, Aurora Balagtas, Edgardo Paragua, Ludivinia Balsalubre & Renato Vicente;**
Her grandchildren :	**Arlene & Alvin; Sophia, Gina & Arnold; Lydia & Melissa, Edgardo, Jr., Catherine & Erick; Val Lauren, Vida Lou & Vera Lyle; Cid Alfred** and **Christopher John;**
Her great grandchildren :	**Christian, Erin, Lia, Ann, Trisha, Jerome** and **CJ;**

Her brother, **Pablo S. Legaspi**, his wife, children & their families;
Her nephews and nieces and other relatives
request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue.

Interment shall be on Thursday, June 9, 2005 at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina after the 8:30 a.m. Mass.

"I am the resurrection and the life, He who believes in Me will live, even thought he dies; and whoever believes in Me will never die." – **John 11:25-26**

JOSE SY TAMCO BALATBAT

*peacefully joined our Creator and his beloved wife **Isabelita T. Reyes** (†) and his son, **Jose, Jr.** (†) on June 6, 2005 at the age of 87.*

His bereaved wife, **Criselda**, and children, **Chit** and **Franchit Valencia**, **Nanding** and **Joy**, **Lydia** and **Judes Echauz**, **Teng** and **Calay**, **Tina** and **Doy Aquino**, **Liza** and **Nards Leviste**, **Mon** and **Mina**, his grandchildren, great grandchildren and relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Shrine Parish, Broadway, New Manila.

Interment will be on Thursday, June 9, 2005 at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina, after the 9:00 a.m. Holy Mass at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel.

ENGR. EUFRACIO "PACITO" G. MAGBOO, SR.

of Bolo, Bauan, Batangas

passed away in the Grace of our Lord on June 5, 2005 at the age of 78.

His bereaved children and children-in-law: **LEISA & GEORGE, RAMON & ANNE, GIGI, JUNE & HEIDI, PETER & SHEILA, BUBUT & MICHAEL** and **ELMA & LAURENCE**, and his grandchildren; other relatives and friends request the readers to join them in praying for his eternal happiness in heaven.

His body lies in state at the Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels, Sucat Road, Parañaque City from June 5 to June 9, 2005 and will be brought to Bolo, Bauan, Batangas on June 10, 2005.

Interment will be on June 12, 2005, at the Bauan Cemetery after the 1:00 p.m. Holy Mass in the Holy Family Parish.

MARY T. LORENZANA

made her farewell to the world last June 2, 2005. She lived a full happy life, and will always be loved by her children **Ronnie & Takako, Alice, Patty, Eugene, Eddie, Vilma & Carl;** and grandchildren **Koreen, James(†), Janice, Michael, Ryan, Yukiko, Tanako & Stephanie.**

Her remains lie in state at Cosmopolitan Church, Taft Avenue, Manila.

Interment will be on Wednesday, June 8, 2005 at Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque after the 9:00 a.m. service at Cosmopolitan Church.

"Let the words of my mouth meet your Favor, keep the thoughts of my heart before you, Lord, my rock, my redeemer..."
Psalm 21:15

PACIFICO NAZARIO NIGUIDULA

Reunited with our Lord, our Maker on June 2, 2005 at the age of 86.
The body lies in state at the
ELLINWOOD MALATE CHURCH UCCP
1660 Vasquez Street, Malate Manila
Necrological Service will be held at 7:00 PM Tuesday June 7, 2005 at Ellinwood Malate Church
Last Rites and Interment will be held at 11:00 AM Wednesday June 8, 2005 at Manila Memorial Park, Sucat Garden of Serenity

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INVITATION TO SUBMIT PROPOSALS

The Ilocos Norte Electric Cooperative, Inc. is inviting qualified consultancy firms to submit proposals for the preparation of "project study on the construction of various distribution line and substation projects of INEC" as required by the Energy Regulatory Commission not later than June 30, 2005 and addressed to the PBAC Chairman.

(Sgd.) **Romillas C. Pascual**
General Manager

(PDI–June 7, 2005)

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PORT DISTRICT OFFICE OF VISAYAS
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NOTICE OF PUBLIC AUCTION

Sealed proposals for the sale of **SCRAP ITEMS/DERELICTS** will be received at the Office of the Philippine Ports Authority, PMO-Iloilo, Baseport, Loboc, La Paz, Iloilo City, not later than June 30 2005 at 3 o'clock in the afternoon (3:00 p.m.) at which date, time and place, said disposal will be opened in the presence of bidders.

The items for public auction contain 1 lot of scrap iron/derelicts based on its actual weight as weigh in the weighing bridge of the PPA, at the minimum price of Eight Pesos and Fifty Centavos (P8.50) per kilo.

Basic Guidelines:
- Procurement of bid forms may be secured at the Senior Supply Officer from June 15 to 20 2005;
- Payment of P200.00 which is non-refundable;
- Prospective bidders are invited to see the actual condition of the items considering that the sale shall be on "As-is-Where-Is" "Cash-and-Carry" basis.
- Pre-bidding meeting will be on June 23, 2005 @ 3:00 p.m. at PMO Iloilo;
- The Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any formality found therein or accept the bid proposal which in its judgment is most advantageous to the government.
- The above-mentioned items are available for inspection at the PPA-Office, Port Management Office, Iloilo City, contact person — The Port Manager, ATTY. FERNANDO CLAVERIA.

06 June 2005, Cebu City, Philippines

(Sgd.) RAUL T. SANTOS
Port District Manager
Chairman, Disposal Committee
(PDI–June 7 & 13, 2005)

Store inauguration of Unica Hija Festival Mall Alabang with Ms. Nancy Castiglione and Rev. Fr. Paul de Vera of St. Benedict College Alabang.

TUESDAY, JUNE 7, 2005

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

DUNKIN' DONUTS
Slabsters

MONDAY **ARTS & BOOKS** • TUESDAY **FITNESS** • WEDNESDAY **2BU** • THURSDAY **FOOD** • FRIDAY **FASHION & BEAUTY**

There is more than a 50-percent chance that children who perform poorly in class have worms

"BULATE AY SUGPUIN" is these school children's battlecry.

Why Pinoy kids may have trouble learning

THE BIÑAN DREAM TEAM: Rezza Custodio, product manager for Mebendazole Antiox; Dr. Vicente Belizario Jr.; Romana Espinoza, district supervisor of Biñan Public Schools; and Jondy Syjuco, franchise manager of Consumer Pharma Division, Janssen Pharmaceutica, a division of Johnson and Johnson

By Shirley Oh
Contributor

IN THE FIRST national diagnostic test given in 2002, only 30 percent of Filipino students passed in English, 28 percent in Science and 27 percent in Mathematics. Many public school students graduate from elementary barely knowing how to read, write and count.

Often the alarming state of Philippine education is blamed on lack of competent teachers, educational facilities and supplies, and budget, as well as chronic malnutrition.

Academic interventions, such as Math clinics and bridge programs, seem not to have changed the situation significantly.

Dr. Vicente Belizario Jr., deputy director of the National Institutes of Health-Phils. and a professor of Parasitology at the College of Public Health in the University of the Philippines Manila, believes one of the most basic issues that should be addressed is the Filipino children's health.

He points out that stomach ache and diarrhea are the most common reasons for absences.

Worms

Belizario says there is more than a 50-percent chance that kids who perform poorly in class have intestinal helminthiasis—in other words, worms.

Intestinal helminthiasis, parasitic infection with one or more species of worms, results from contact with surfaces, food or anything contaminated with human or animal feces.

At least 20 million Filipinos have parasites. The infection, particularly common in the tropics, reduces a person's work capacity, lowers concentration and causes abdominal pains and digestive problems. Worms can consume 0.05 cubic centimeters of blood per day. With a lifespan of five to six months, they are a major cause of malnutrition that can make learning difficult.

In 1999, Belizario's study in seven sections of third-graders at the San Vicente Elementary School found that 82 percent of the children had worms. The highest rate of infestation was found among the worst performers in the lowest section. The findings established a correlation between parasites and class performance.

Studies in 2001 among Grade 1 students in different regions and cities in the country, showed that 67 percent of those surveyed had worms. Another nationwide survey in 2004 showed that 66 percent of the country's preschoolers also had intestinal parasites.

Fastest solution

The obvious and fastest solution to the problem, of course, is deworming. Though efforts of the Department of Health, such as *Garantisadong Pambata* (deworming for preschoolers), focus on this, Belizario says they are not enough.

"These efforts are not as effective as they should be because of a number of factors," he says, citing, among others, poor hygiene, poor environmental sanitation, poor delivery and low coverage of public health services, and a low impact of control efforts due to lack of resources.

SUPER ANTIOX teaches kids proper hygiene and and the need for deworming in a skit.

DOH targeted preschoolers and Grade 1 students but worms affected everyone, including adults. But the biggest problem, Belizario says, is that parasitic infection is not considered a priority.

Now government officials in Biñan, Laguna, are changing that perception. Romana Ezpinosa, district supervisor of Biñan Public Schools, supports Belizario's program of periodic deworming of public school children.

"I have high ambitions for the children of Biñan," she says. Getting the support of the local government and the school board, Espinoza and Belizario conducted semi-annual deworming starting in 1999 for all public schools in the Biñan district, starting with the San Vicente Elementary School.

To overcome resistance from both parents and some teachers (the program meant additional work for them), Espinoza turned the deworming program into a school affair that kids could enjoy and parents would approve of.

"We set up a grand parade and held contests for the children," she says. "We also staged plays about good hygiene and deworming."

Improvements

Between 1998 and 1999, the number of infected students markedly decreased, Belizario says, "From 88 percent, we went down to 66 percent." In three years, infection was down to 38 percent. Academic improvements were also seen.

"Biñan ranked second and third in Science and Math in 2003, from its 15th position the two previous years," Expinoza says. "In 2004, out of the 20 top performing schools in Laguna, five were from Biñan."

She realizes that the deworming program is not the sole reason for the academic improvement but only one of the steps to achieve the goal of quality education.

Belizario says, "Deworming is not a one-shot deal. It needs to be sustained. It is ideal that we deworm twice a year—in summer and Christmas—to ensure that we remain worm-free."

Biñan's success appears to have inspired Santa Rosa, which is now drawing up its own program. Asked why other districts are slow to follow Biñan's example, Belizario cites budget problems and different priorities.

"Biñan is lucky to have the budget and progressive-thinking officials," he says. The municipality also benefits from the support of Janssen Pharmaceutica, makers of Antiox, which pledged to provide 48,000 500-mg chewable tablets to cover the semi-annual campaign among 24,000 children.

Antiox, a relatively affordable one-dose treatment, can eradicate and prevent worms for 4-6 months. It contains 500 mg of broad-spectrum Mebendazole, the World Health Organization-recommended safe and effective dosage for both children (aged 2 and above) and adults.

Recently, Rezza Custodio, product manager for Mebendazole Antiox, and Jondy Syjuco, franchise manager of Consumer Pharma Division, Janssen Pharmaceutica, invited media people to lunch to celebrate the success of Biñan and to generate support for deworming programs in other municipalities and provinces.

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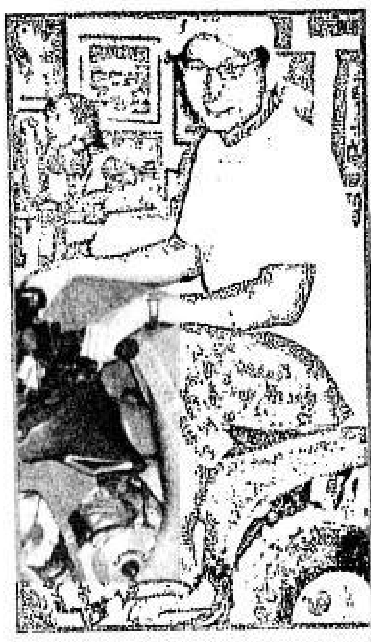
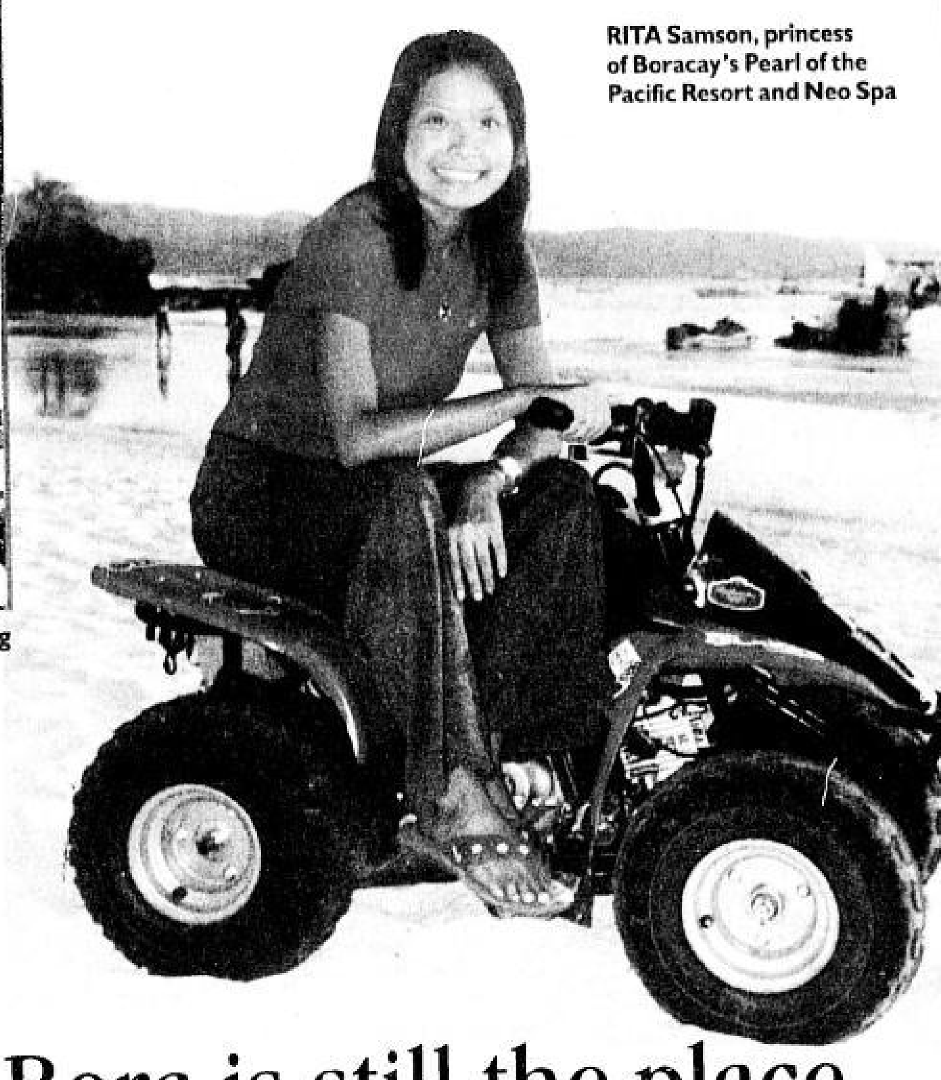
I LIKE IT. Metro Society's editor in chief Lia Bernardo can't say enough about the pocket bike.



OFF TO RUSTAN'S. Mike Huang of Rustan's Store Specialists



RITA Samson, princess of Boracay's Pearl of the Pacific Resort and Neo Spa

HIP architect Victor Consunji does his flip-flop.

THAT'S the way I like to zoom around Bora. Moi.

BORACAY'S mega endorser and the brains behind the island's popular McSandro Resto, Louie Cruz, hits the beach.

BRILLIANT top couturier Pepito Albert says, "Perfect for the beach."

HEY, my long legs fit! Miguel Noble, top pro basketball player

Bora is still the place for shakers and movers

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by Alex Van Hagen using **Kodak** EasyShare system

AH, BORACAY, my southern tropical paradise, is still the most popular destination for vacationers and thrill-seekers.

Hot-hotshots in the business world, photographers, waistline-watchers, bodies to die for and faces only a god could have created are all eager to experience this island's unique flavor, *palanggas*.

Yeah! There were bikini-clad women working on their tan, bodies beautiful, volleyball players, wind surfers and people still standing after 15 shots of tequila at Cocomangas. Little and big boys built sand castles while others joined the dragon boat competitions, all getting an unforgettable summer high.

And Globe added to the excitement by introducing the super pocket bikes that offered nonstop exhilarating rides, attracting thrill-seekers, kids and even their mamas and papas. Hey, after all, it's the only ride that makes big waves on dry land, dahlings, making you feel like you're surfing on wheels.

In Boracay, scores don't matter, only fun, because everyone is a winner. It's no wonder then that sports enthusiasts like **Monsour del Rosario** and his **Joy Zapanta**; **Ernie Lopez**; **Donnie Geisler**; cool personas Gov. **Bongbong Marcos** and his wife lawyer **Lisa Araneta**; **Choy Cojuangco** and wife **Marissa Echauz**; stunningly gorgeous **Sam Eduque**; **Edvee Cruz**; adorable **Gizell Sityar**; concert producer and art connoisseur **Patrick Reyno**; in-demand architect **Anton Mendoza**; gent for all seasons **DJ Montano**; ahhh, the Hilton gal of Manille, **Celine Lopez**; good-looker **David Nugent**, with observant **Philip Cruz**; PR plus-plus **Donnie Ramirez**; Nami Hotel's **Alex Ledesma**, with his favorite Shu Uemura's gal, **Tina Tinio**; vivacious, former beauty queen **Peachie Veneracion**; witty business entrepreneur **Al Tengco** and wife, tall eye-catcher **Carla Reyes**; plus others just as beautiful as them, all want to get shipwrecked—or better yet, pocket bike-wrecked—in Bora, *palanggas*.

Moi sat on the coolest pocket bike gear and drove along the beach with the wind blowing on my tanned face, enjoying an ocean view to die for.

Seasoned ecotourists always leave only footprints behind and take nothing away. Yes, they simply take snapshots with their cool cellular phones to send to the rest of the world via MMS (multi-media messaging service), boasting about their unforgettable joyride in Boracay. With the pocket bike, Globe is there to help you follow and treasure your dreams.

The Great Boracay Race never ends, *n'est ce pas?* (as in, *di bala?*) And neither does the super beach lifestyle that Boracay is known for. That's why the government and the Department of Tourism's young hip achiever, good-looker Secretary **Ace Durano**, better get their act on the road, before we lose our awesome island paradise, *palanggas*.

All in the family

It's one of those really fun parties. A close-knit *famille* and pals got together at the sprawling, eye-catching home of renowned interior designer and landscaper **Cocoy Cordoba**, no less, in Ayala, Alabang. This particular bash was in honor of my sister-in-law's—the vivaciously adorable, **Maria Cristina "Chang" Cordoba Bernasconi**—"recurring" 30th birthday, *palanggas*.

Our host, Cocoy was *tres* excited because "we haven't gotten together for quite some time and to celebrate our most favorite and vibrant member of the Cordoba famille," he told us.

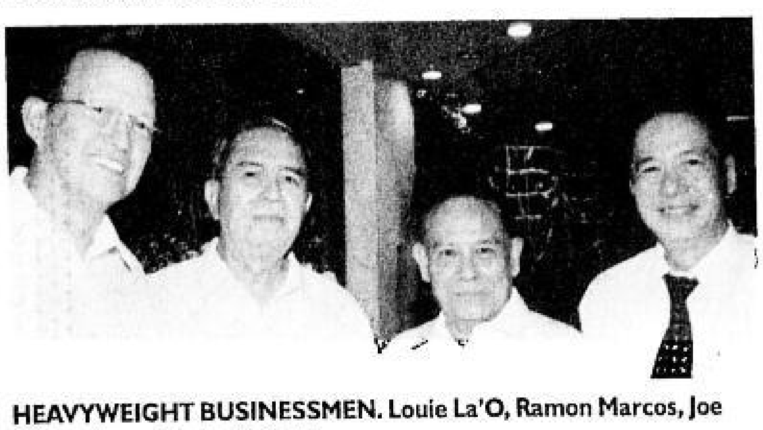
The fab caviar pie, washed down with champagne, started off the fantastic six-course sit-down dinner, superbly prepared and executed by one of the best, **Millie Reyes** of the Plaza, *natch*. The Versace-style table-setting was meticulously arranged by Cocoy himself, complementing the house interiors, which were very Versace in color and design. A complete crew of shapely white-uniformed waiters attended to the guests.

The tantalizing honoree had a ball and even sang along with the pianist, who provided the live entertainment, on Cocoy's grand piano. Chang says she's blissfully fulfilled, and now pampers herself and her "*nietos y nietas*." (as in, grandchildren, dahlings).

Chang had barely said "thank you" before a cake appeared, accompanied by a rowdy rendition of "Happy Birthday" that left no chance for the honoree to protest the one candle on her cake at this fun happening, *palanggas*.

"GET me to the church on time." Good-looking PJ Synaechel and his bride, gorgeous Jennifer Basa

MEGA realtor Jorge Bernasconi, sister Gina B. Tuason, Cristy Shultz Bernasconi, and hostess of the affair Tammie Martinez Cordoba



HEAVYWEIGHT BUSINESSMEN. Louie La'O, Ramon Marcos, Joe Clemente and Judes Echauz

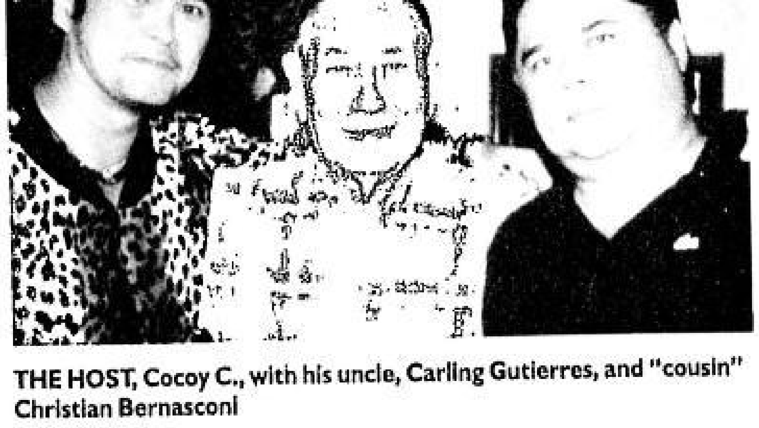
NATHANIA Cordoba

THE HONOREE Chang Bernasconi with all her good-looking grandchildren—Luigi, Louis, Maria, Edoardo, Jose Ramon and Magali

OUR QUEEN for a day. Cristina Cordoba vda. de Bernasconi marks another beautiful and happy year.

CELEBRATOR'S pals from way back. Cristina Cordoba, Menchu Marcos and Emma Clemente

TINA Bernasconi Echauz, with sister Gina B. Tuason and Ana La'O



THE HOST, Cocoy C., with his uncle, Carling Gutierres, and "cousin" Christian Bernasconi

Fax messages from the dead

Part I

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Licauco

I'VE HEARD stories of the dead reporting for work and punching time cards, signing a voucher for a check donation to him, sending text messages to relatives or leaving some legible writing on a wall or mirror.

But the dead sending five fax messages to the living is something new. Here's the entire incredible story e-mailed by Renato Formoso, a telecom business executive who attended recently my seminar in Inner Mind Development. People's names were changed to protect their privacy.

Renato's second cousin, Ramon, was unemployed and spent most of his time with his *barkada*, drinking or just hanging around.

"When my company needed to hire several technicians," Renato said, "I encouraged him to apply, though he had no technical training. He was reluctant at first... but I told him I would have the other technicians help him. Since I was the project manager, (he got) the job. I also hired his *barkada*, Rolando...

"The two did very well after a year and completed several projects in different regions in the Philippines. In fact, they even did better than (our) more qualified technicians. My cousin's parents were very proud of... his perseverance and hard work.

"... his father was jobless (then having) just completed a contract in Saudi Arabia. So Ramon helped his family financially and became a very respectable person. He turned away from alcohol and *barkada*.

Sudden death

"It was in 1998, (his) second year (with) the company, that tragedy happened. My cousin Ramon, with Rolando and other technicians, were assigned to a (four-month) project in Butuan City... As project manager, I visited them several times to check on the work... Everything seemed fine and the project was on schedule. I was back in Manila when I received a call at around 6 p.m. from one of Ramon's fellow technicians.

"Here is how the conversation went as I recall very vividly:

"Technician: 'Sir, *si* Ramon *patay na*!'

"*Ano? Nagbibiro ka ba? Lakasan mo nga boses mo!*

"Technician: '*Patay na po siya. Kumain lang po kami sa karinderya, tapos umuwi siya sa* barracks *dahil nagtatae, kami naman nasa* jobsite *lahat*.'

"*Anong nangyari?*

"Technician: '*Pag-uwi namin, naabutan namin nangingitim na mga kuko nya, pati labi, kaya sinugod namin sa ospital, pero* dead on arrival.'

"I put the phone down. I was shocked! I could not talk. I was thinking how it could happen and what would be the reaction of his family...

"I received a call from his brother in Manila asking if (the report) was true. He said (Ramon's) companion, Rolando, called them. I told (the brother) to calm down and I would verify first. I called the other technicians and they confirmed the (report). I tried to talk to Rolando, but the other technicians (said) he was in deep shock, speechless.

"I I tried to stay calm and arrange all necessary flights, permits to bring the body back to Manila.

"When I got home, I talked to my mother and father about what happened to my cousin. I could hear his father's hysterical cry... because they were living on the second level of our apartment.

"I went to his parents' house and explained everything. (They) were very emotional and, at one point, I was blamed for giving him the job... I remained calm and let them express their emotions. Friends and other cousins came and I told them that, together with his eldest brother, I would fly to Butuan to bring back the body of my cousin.

'It was like his heart suddenly stopped. It was a mysterious death. No one had an explanation'

"(After) a sleepless night, I picked up his brother (to go) to the domestic airport. I saw most of my relatives were also awake, providing us moral support. I heard their sad voices, '*Ingat kayo, balik niyo si* Ramon *dito*.'

"It was a very sad flight to Butuan. I remember my elder cousin (Ramon's brother) telling me he always dreamt of traveling in an airplane, but can't believe that his first time would be to bring back his brother's body. (Upon arrival) we went straight to the funeral parlor... My elder cousin was crying. I tried to remain calm and suppress my emotion. I told myself, 'Renato, presence of mind, must stay calm, must arrange everything.'

"(From) the Manila Domestic Airport, the body was brought to the NBI (National Bureau of Investigation) for autopsy. I went straight home, very tired and sleepless. The NBI found nothing unusual, no foul play, on the body.

"It was like his heart suddenly stopped. It was a mysterious death. No one (had an explanation). Some old folks were saying maybe *nabulungan* (poisoned).... When the body arrived in his house... heavy rains (fell). It was like nature was also mourning his death. After the one-week wake, the body was buried."

Next week: The fax messages

Address letters to this column to Prince Plaza I, 106 Legazpi St., Legazpi Village, Makati City. Call 8107245 or 8926806 for information on seminars I conduct. E-mail jlicauco@edsamail.com.ph or visit http:// www.jlicauco.shorturl.com. Listen to my dzMM radio program 7-8 p.m. every Sunday

New beauty and health finds

From page C4

als, solvents, pesticides, alcohol, its anti-aging properties cannot be ignored. It breaks down oxidized fats and is needed for carbohydrate metabolism. L-glutathione is available in health food stores/vitamin shops like Healthy Options, GNC, Health & Beyond.

Skin whitening oral preparations, on the other hand, are available at most dermatological centers under the brand name Optimale. For handy LBC one-day delivery or bulk orders, call United Shelter Health Products, 9390131; for Lucida-DS USA-brand of skin whiteners, Dr. Olie Gonzales, director, Philippine Academy of Clinical and Cosmetic Dermatology, 5238963; Dr. Joan Zarate, Zarater Hospital, Las Piñas, 8718267, 0922-8258224; or Dr. Ronald Raguero, 0922-8075738. Visit www.lucidads.com.

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Herbal magic

Ancient preventive medicine has been around to help women avoid cervical/uterine cancer. In Old China some 3,000 years ago, the mugwort herb was used in the imperial household as hip bath. Mugwort was heated in a copper jar in preparation for bed service for the Emperor.

In 300 BC, mugwort was used to treat 170 diseases including gynecological problems. Today, mugwort can be used as uterine fumigation through Herbcom (from Korea), a self-treatment kit that includes the herb's and applicator.

The modern invention contains eucalyptol cineole, an essential ingredient that addresses pelvic inflammatory diseases, cervicitis and cystitis (urinary frequency). It is also used to keep the uterine and vaginal area fresh, healthy and clean. Call Herbtech Korea (www.herbcom.net) or Ju Global, 8964953 and 8953070.

Affirmation for the day

"Miracles are for believers. And I am a believer."

Health/beauty regimen for the week

Take green juice every day for an enzyme treat.

½ green bell pepper
1 carrot
¼ tsp *malunggay*
1 c *buko* juice/water

Blend, adding ½ teaspoon honey (optional) then drink up.

Love and light!

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ENJOY the delicious taste of natural chocolate flavor minus the guilt with Nu Skin's Trimshake.

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Trimshake is high in protein but low in fat. It contains soluble fiber; an innovative ingredient, Glucosol, to reduce hunger pangs and carbohydrate craving. It also provide additional calories for extra energy needed during high-intensity workouts.

Trimshake can be taken twice a day as meal replacements.

Trimshake is manufactured by Pharmanex, a division of Nu Skin Enterprises, a leading global multi-level marketing company. Pharmanex nutritionals are available in the country through Nu Skin Enterprises' local affiliate, Nu Skin Enterprises Philippines, Inc. (NSP). Call NSP's distributor hotline, 6890333 or log onto www.nuskin.com.ph.

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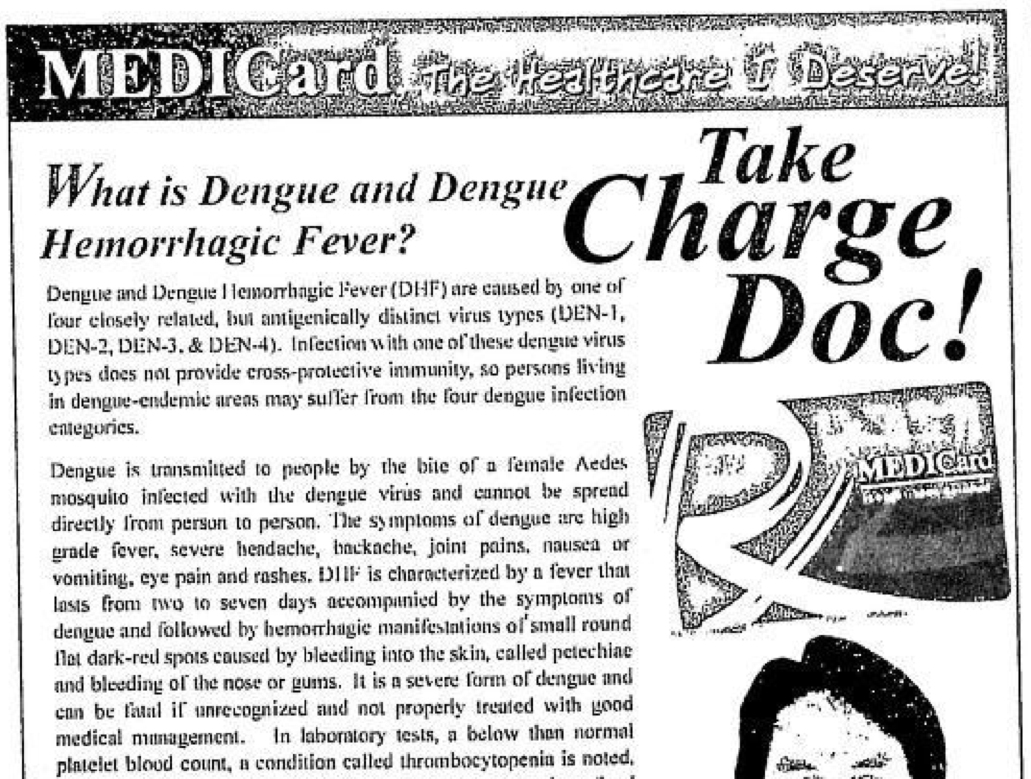

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Take Charge Doc!

What is Dengue and Dengue Hemorrhagic Fever?

Dengue and Dengue Hemorrhagic Fever (DHF) are caused by one of four closely related, but antigenically distinct virus types (DEN-1, DEN-2, DEN-3, & DEN-4). Infection with one of these dengue virus types does not provide cross-protective immunity, so persons living in dengue-endemic areas may suffer from the four dengue infection categories.

Dengue is transmitted to people by the bite of a female Aedes mosquito infected with the dengue virus and cannot be spread directly from person to person. The symptoms of dengue are high grade fever, severe headache, backache, joint pains, nausea or vomiting, eye pain and rashes. DHF is characterized by a fever that lasts from two to seven days accompanied by the symptoms of dengue and followed by hemorrhagic manifestations of small round flat dark-red spots caused by bleeding into the skin, called petechiae and bleeding of the nose or gums. It is a severe form of dengue and can be fatal if unrecognized and not properly treated with good medical management. In laboratory tests, a below than normal platelet blood count, a condition called thrombocytopenia is noted. Likewise, hemoconcentration, the increase in the proportion of red blood cells relative to plasma is also a finding. The continued leakage of plasma may lead to shock or even death if not corrected.

This week's answer to our feature question on Dengue and DHF was provided by MEDICard's Medical Coordinator at Healthserv Los Baños, Dr. Ronaldo E. Laptan. Doc Ron, as he is commonly addressed by his patients, specializes in Infectious Diseases. He is a 1994 graduate of Medicine from Fatima College. In 2000, Dr. Laptan finished his residency for Family Medicine at the Fatima Medical Center. Members may visit him for their consultation services at Room 10 of Healthserv Los Baños, Mondays 9 AM to 5 PM and on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 9 AM to 2 PM. He also holds clinic at the Calamba Medical Center, Room 3111 from Tuesdays to Fridays, 3 to 6 PM and on Sundays from 9 AM to 3 in the afternoon.

MEDICard's Medical Director, Dr. Nicky Montoya answers questions on health through the assistance and expertise of MEDICard's network of accredited specialists. Write to Dr. Nicky or E-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com for your inquiries on health matters.

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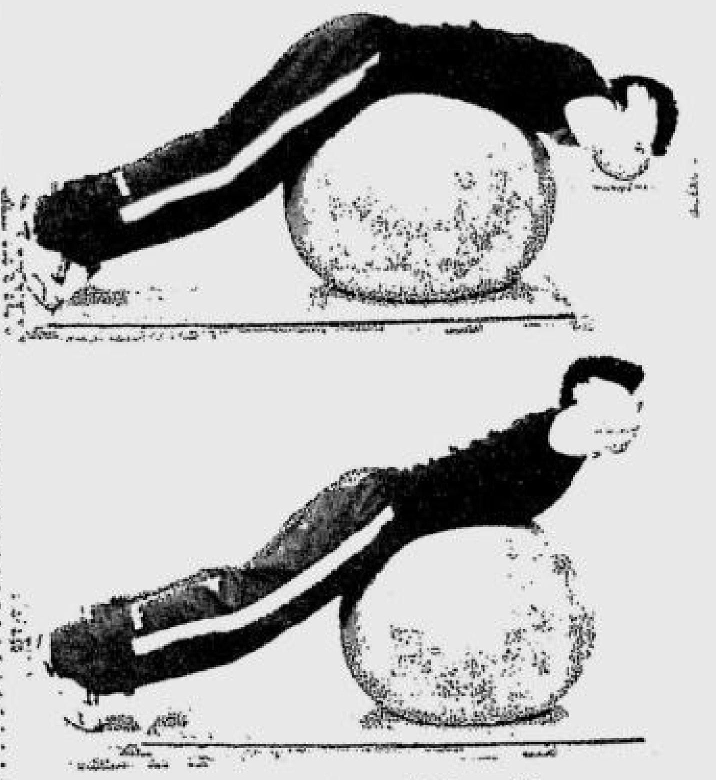
EXERCISE OF THE WEEK

Back extension on stability ball



THIS exercise strengthens the erector spinae, a group of muscles that run down the length of the spine.

Equipment:

Stability ball

Exercise technique:

1. Kneel down with the ball in front of you.

2. Place your torso on the ball and roll forward until you have both hands on the floor. Your legs should be straight behind you, hip width apart, on your toes.

3. Lower your torso down with your hands behind your head. This is the starting position.

4. Contract the lower back muscles and lift your torso up forming a straight line with your hips and legs.

5. Do the desired number of repetitions.

Performance tips:

1. Inhale as you lift; exhale as you lower.

2. If you have a history of chronic back problems, consult your doctor before doing this exercise.

3. Keep shoulder relaxed and pressed away from your ears.

4. Keep your head and neck in line with your body.

5. There is no need to hyperextend the lower back when you raise your torso up.

6. To make the exercise easier, keep your hands on the ball.

Repetitions:

Do 10 repetitions.

Body trivia

WELL AND GOOD

Tina Juan

I have always been fascinated with the human body and how it works. So I bought "The Odd Body" by Dr. Stephen Juan (no relation) when I saw it in a bookstore.

Juan, a behavioral scientist, anthropologist and professor at the University of Sydney, answers more than just the usual questions about the body. His book is about "weird" stuff like why can't I tickle myself, why do we yawn or why do we blush.

He also provides bizarre information about how headhunters shrink heads, how mummies are made, and what made Michael Jackson's skin white.

The book is filled with fascinating trivia. Here is a small sampling of interesting facts about your body.

Brain

A single human brain generates more electrical impulses in one day than all the telephones in the world.

If you could harness the power used by your brain, you could power a ten-watt light bulb.

When we touch something, we send a message to our brain at 124 miles an hour.

The average human brain has about 100 billion nerve cells.

Women's brains are smaller than men's brains by an average of 12 percent.

On an average day, the human brain produces 70,000 thoughts.

Eyes, nose, ears and mouth

True black eyes are not known in humans. Eye color varies from very light blue to very dark brown.

The human eye is capable of differentiating 10 million colors.

One-quarter of the human brain is used to control the eyes.

It is impossible to keep your eyes open while sneezing.

Of the five senses, the one that is less sharp after you eat too much is hearing.

Smell is the sense that is most closely linked to memory.

The average life span of the human taste bud is seven to 10 days. By age 60, most people will have lost half their taste buds.

The average talker sprays about 300 microscopic saliva droplets a minute. This is about two and a half droplets per word.

A sneeze can exceed a speed of 100 miles an hour.

When you laugh, you expel short bursts of air up to 70 miles an hour.

Our nose and ears never stop growing but our eyes stay the same size from infancy.

The sound of a snore can be as loud as a pneumatic drill.

The average mouth produces 1.8 pints (3.6 cups) of saliva per day.

Skin, hair and nails

Your belly button increases and decreases in size as you gain or lose weight.

By the age of 70, the average person will have shed 105 pounds of skin.

If you ate too many carrots, you would actually turn orange.

In one square inch of your hand you have nine feet of blood vessels, 600 pain sensors, 9,000 nerve endings, 36 heat sensors, and 76 pressure sensors.

The length of the finger dictates how fast the fingernail grows, so the nail on your middle finger grows the fastest. The nail on the thumb grows slowest.

Fingernails grow almost four times faster than toenails.

Hair grows fastest in the morning than at any other time of the day.

The average human hair can support nearly four-and-a-half pounds of weight. If a human hair were as thick as a nylon rope, it could support a train engine.

Intelligent people have more zinc and copper in their hair.

Men lose about 40 hairs a day. Women lose about 70 hairs a day.

Skeleton, bones and teeth

Tooth enamel is the hardest substance manufactured by the human body.

The most sensitive finger is the index finger.

The femur or thighbone is the strongest bone.

The hardest bone is the jawbone.

The knee is the most easily injured joint. Babies are born without kneecaps. Kneecaps don't appear until the child reaches 2 to 6 years of age.

The length from your wrist to your elbow is the same as the length of your foot.

Heart, liver and other organs

The average adult has between 40 and 50 billion fat cells.

If laid out in a straight line, the average adult's circulatory system would be nearly 60,000 miles long—enough to circle the earth two and a half times.

It takes 60 seconds for the blood to make one complete circuit of the body.

The human heart beats about 70 times a minute. That's about three billion times in an average lifetime. The heart creates enough pressure when it pumps blood out of the body to squirt blood 30 feet. It can pump 40 million gallons of blood in a lifetime.

The liver is the largest gland in the body. It is also the largest of the body's internal organs.

The right lung takes in more air than the left lung. That's because to make room for the heart, the left lung is smaller than the right lung.

Every second, the body's bone marrow creates three million blood cells. During that same second, it destroys the same number.

The stomach produces a new layer of mucus every two weeks so that stomach acid will not devour the stomach lining. Stomach acid is strong enough to dissolve a nail.

Blood is thicker than fresh water but about the same thickness as seawater.

If you took all the urine the world produces in one day, it would take a full 20 minutes to flow over Niagara Falls.

The daily heat output of the average person would boil eight gallons of freezing water.

My favorite

My favorite body trivia from Juan's book is: "If you could remove all the spaces from the atoms that make up your body, you would be small enough to pass through the eye of a needle." Kind of mind-blowing, isn't it?

Visit www.tinajuanfitness.info

New beauty and health finds

Part I

INSIDE OUT

Cory Quirino

EVER-CHANGING, ever-expanding, the health and beauty horizon is seemingly endless.

New discoveries are constantly being made while ancient remedies are being given a second look. Here are some recent development:

Power in fruit

Queen Victoria considered it her favorite fruit, Gourmet Magazine calls it "the world's most seductive fruit" and, in Asia, it is hailed "The Queen of Fruits."

But the mangosteen is also medicine. Fred Templeman, MD, author of "The X-Factor Book" wrote that substances called xanthones were identified by scientists in the rainforest plant.

Mangosteen has the greatest supply of xanthones, potent antioxidants (substances that fight disease-causing oxygen free radicals and boost the immune system).

Of the over 200 xanthones in nature, more than 40 are found in mangosteen. Its health benefits include microbiological balance, maintenance of the health of the immune system and improvement of joint flexibility.

Dr. James Duke, one of America's foremost ethno-botanists, created a phyto-chemical and ethnobotanical database on mangosteen. Refer to www.ars-grin.gov/duke (check "plant." Under list chemicals and activities for a plant enter "mangosteen.")

The craze for mangosteen as a health drink began with American Joe Morton whose mother was in the herbal remedy store business. After tasting the fruit, he explored its benefits having discovered that in ancient southeast Asia, it was used to ward off infection and control fever.

Soon, Xango was born, a powerfully pleasant health tonic using the fruit and its purple outer skin. It is said a capful a day is all you need. Call Jun Mendoza, 9420259, cell 0918-9244968; or David Odea, cell 0920-2136463.

Glutathione

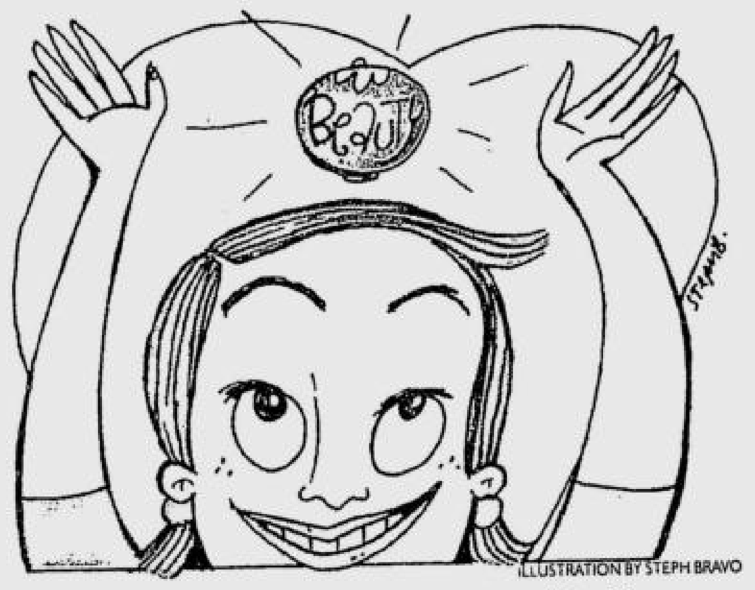


ILLUSTRATION BY STEPH BRAVO

Often referred to as master antioxidant, it is a small protein made up of three amino acids called cysteine, glutamic acid and glycine found in body cells particularly the liver. Health experts know glutathione protects the body from toxins, thus, the greater exposure to toxins, the faster the body uses up its glutathione supply.

Without the help of this amino acid, the body's cells die more quickly, speeding up the aging process as well as placing the individual at greater risk of toxin-induced diseases like cancer.

Other factors causing glutathione levels in the body to drop are drugs, pollution, radiation, smoking, aging, oxidative stress due to diseases. Glutathione deficiency may lead to HIV (AIDS-causing microorganism) infection, cancer, cataracts, diabetes mellitus, tremors, low sperm count, mental disorder, nervous system disorder.

Another result of glutathione supplementation is skin-whitening, when combined with vitamin C. It successfully blocks or modifies conversion of black/brown/yellow melanin pigmentation (Eumelanin) to reddish white pigmentation (Phaeomelanin) after 1-6 months usage. As a whitener, consumption should be 20-40 mg/kg body weight per day in 2-3 equal sized doses.

Example: If you weigh 127 lb or 58 kg, you will need to take at least 1,160 mg of glutathione plus 2,500 mg of Vitamin C (should be double the dosage of L-glutathione) in two equal doses.

The regimen has no known side effects except a boost in the immune system and whitening of the skin. Vitamin C and glutathione, being water soluble, are flushed out and not stored by the body.

While L-glutathione is mainly for ridding the body of heavy met

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